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January 1920

THE  
**RED BOOK**  
MAGAZINE





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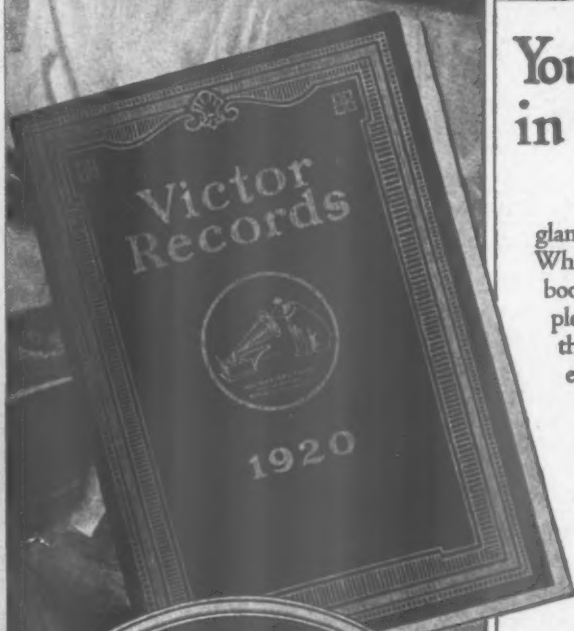
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THE EDUCATIONAL BUREAU

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

33 West 42nd St, New York

# The Couple That Spent Every Cent

**A**BOUT six months ago I got the scare of my life. Edith was worried, too. But in the end it was one of the best things that ever happened to us.

I guess I had a pretty close call. The doctor said afterwards that he never expected me to pull through.

But it wasn't my own sickness that gave me my fright—at least I wasn't alarmed about myself. It was the sick condition of the family finances, and thinking of Edith and the boy that put me in a panic.

There I was, flat on my back in bed; a big doctor's bill running up; a trained nurse to pay every week; and no reserve to fall back on—not a dollar laid by for emergency.

Luckily the firm was good enough to continue my salary without a break, or I don't know what we would have done.

The things that went through my mind during that slow process of getting well made me feel like a criminal. Suppose the worst had happened? No provision for Edith and the boy except a little insurance—the total amount not enough to last more than a year at the rate we had been living.

It hurt like a stab. It seems incredible that two people in their right minds could drift along the way we had been doing, constantly living up to the last cent, constantly on the edge of a slippery precipice. Yet according to statistics, something like 50% of all the men in America over sixty years of age are dependent on relatives or charity for support—including men who had earned princely incomes when in their prime. Think of it! And all because they had failed to look ahead—had never learned how to save. It hit me right between the eyes. For I was nearly thirty-two years old—certainly old enough to know better; yet I wasn't a dollar nearer independence than when I was twenty.

One day, while still in bed, I ran across something in one of the magazines that opened my eyes to our whole trouble. It said that most people make hard work of saving simply because they don't go at it in the right way. Their money doesn't last long because they have no check on it—no definite system for adjusting their outgo to their income. It said the only practical way is the budget system—split your salary up into proportionate parts; allow so much each week for this, so much for that, and then stick to it.

Then the article told of an almost automatic way for doing this—a new system for managing personal affairs; it was called the Ferrin Money Making Account System.

It struck me that this was just what Edith and I needed if we ever expected to get

WHERE did it all go? Forbes earned a good salary. Neither he nor Mrs. Forbes could be accused of extravagance. But somehow they could never keep more than a few dollars ahead of expenses. Then something happened that gave them a scare—and out of it they found an easy way to get on **EASY STREET.**

our feet on solid ground. When I showed my discovery to Edith, she agreed with me, and immediately sent for the complete system.

That little step has proved to be our salvation. It has helped us put nearly \$500 in the bank in less than six months—out of the same salary that was formerly never enough. At the same time it helped us to pay a big doctor's bill without ever missing the money.

The Ferrin Money Making Account System has shown us how to cut out all that old haphazard, hit or miss kind of spending, how to save money that we formerly frittered away—how to stop the little leaks that were keeping us poor.

## The Magic Budget Plan

The Ferrin Money Making Account System is simplifying money matters for thousands upon thousands of people all over the country—helping square up bills and debts—putting money in the bank for people who never before saved a cent. It will help you in the same way. This system, which is simplicity itself, comprises:

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The Ferrin Kitchen Calendar (for the household)  
The Ferrin Pocket Account Book  
The Ferrin Investment and Insurance Register  
The Ferrin Household Inventory and Fire Insurance Record

Compact Information is given on Making a Budget, Keeping Expense Accounts, Making Safe Investments, Making an Inventory of Household Goods.

The Pocket Account Book (price when sold separately, 50 cents) contains printed slips so that you have only to jot down the amounts of your daily expenditures. The Kitchen Calendar (price 50 cents) keeps track of household expenses. At the end of each week or month these amounts are transferred to the Money Making Account Book, which contains 112 pages, sizes 8½x10½ inches, and is bound in half blue Silk Cloth Back—Café Blue Cover, Paper Slides—Turned Edges, semi-flexible, stamped in gold on Front Cover. This book has been prepared by an expert to fit any salary from the smallest to the largest. Incorporated in it is a recapitulation for every month of the year, which shows at a glance the Budget and the amounts paid out during the month for the various classified items of expense. It is the only book to our knowledge which has a Budget Column for every month. Special columns are provided for items on which an income tax does not have to be paid, so that these amounts may be deducted at the end of the year.

## One Money Saving Feature

A war tax is now levied on almost every kind of article you buy. Few people know that the amounts so paid on daily purchases may properly be deducted from their income tax report. The following items, for example, are deductible. Interest on personal indebtedness; taxes on land, buildings and household property; war taxes on club dues, theatre tickets, transportation, telephone messages, telegrams, tobacco, etc.; contributions to churches, charitable, scientific or educational institutions which are not conducted for profit. By keeping track of these war taxes on the pages for daily expenditures, and transferring the weekly or monthly totals to the Money Making Account Book, you will effect a saving on your income tax that will surprise you and that will pay the small price of the System many times over.



"The things that went through my mind during that slow process of getting well, made me feel like a criminal."

The Ferrin Investment Insurance Register is designed to keep an accurate record of your investments, insurance policies, etc. Contains 32 pages size 5 x 8 inches, price separately, 50 cents. The Ferrin Inventory and Fire Insurance Record will enable you to make and keep a complete inventory of every room in the house; also provides for record of your fire insurance policy. It is an absolute necessity in case of fire. It may save you many thousands times the cost, which is 50 cents when sold separately.

## Two Minutes a Day

The Ferrin Money Making Account System takes only two minutes a day. Any grammar school boy or girl can keep the accounts. This method is not a hard task.

Now you need not worry about the money you spend for clothes, food, rent, or the theatre. You will spend it freely because you know how much you can afford to spend. The Ferrin Money Making Account System is a most practical gift to any newly married couple. Many people use them for Christmas gifts.

## Send No Money

See how the Ferrin Money Making Account System works magically, no matter how much or how little your income. We know what you will think of it when you see it. So we are willing to send you the complete System without your sending us any money in advance. Just mail the coupon and back will come the System by return mail. If you feel that you can afford not to have it, simply send it back, and you will owe nothing.

But when you have seen what big returns the Ferrin System will pay you, you will surely want to keep this wonderful aid to money-making, especially as we are now making a special short-time offer of only \$3 for the complete System.

You will appreciate what a remarkable offer this is when you consider that other expense account books are sold for \$3 and cover a period of only two years. The Ferrin Money Making Book covers four years, and therefore has twice the value, \$6. And in addition you get the Ferrin Kitchen Calendar, the Ferrin Pocket Account Book, the Ferrin Investment and Insurance Register, the Ferrin Household Inventory and Fire Insurance Record, each worth 50 cents, or \$2. You have the opportunity, therefore, of securing \$8 value for only \$3.

But we can make this special combination offer only for a limited time. You are therefore urged to mail the coupon now—to do so costs nothing and does not obligate you in any way, and it may be a revelation to you of how much more you can get out of your income.

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"The simplicity of your plan, which, by comparison with previous methods of account keeping, would seem to be well-nigh automatic, appeals to me strongly."

"They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but I will say to you that I am going to use the Ferrin Book for my own family expenses, and consider it will make money for me right from the start."

(Signed) D. S. Burton.

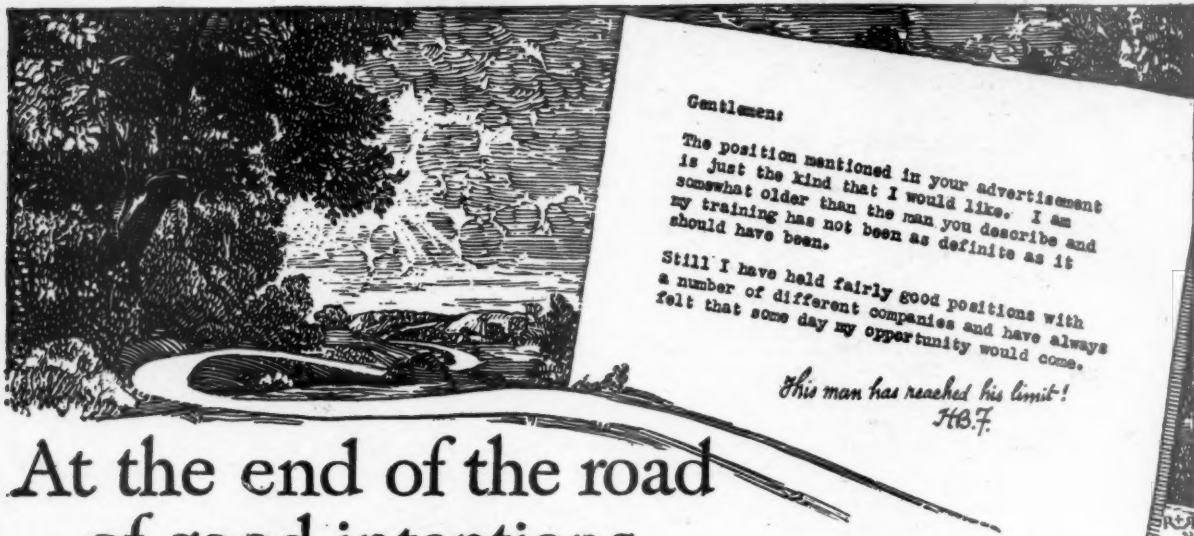
Letter from A. B. Dick, Jr., of the A. B. Dick Company of Chicago, Manufacturers of the Edison-Dick Mimeograph Machine:

"I can candidly say that all the record books which you have issued are practically invaluable to the man who wished to handle his personal and household accounts in the proper manner. I have seen several systems to take care of these matters, but yours covers the ground in a more thorough manner than any of them."

"To further show my appreciation I would like to have three copies of your Investment and Insurance Register, and also one copy of the 'Money Making Account Book' if these are off the press and available. It would be particularly gratifying to have them in sufficient time for the opening of the new year. If you will forward your bill I will be very glad to remit."

(Signed) A. B. Dick, Jr.





Gentlemen:

The position mentioned in your advertisement is just the kind that I would like. I am somewhat older than the man you describe and my training has not been as definite as it should have been.

Still I have held fairly good positions with a number of different companies and have always felt that some day my opportunity would come.

*This man has reached his limit!*  
H.B.F.

## At the end of the road of good intentions

**R**ECENTLY a large New York corporation advertised for a man to fill an important executive position.

The name of the corporation was not signed to the advertisement; and one of the applications received was from a man who is a neighbor of an official in the company.

The official read that application. Across the corner he wrote simply a single sentence: *This man has reached his limit*; and signed his initials. He might have written more, for he knew the whole history of the applicant; but the single sentence was enough. It closed the chapter.

### *The careers that promise well but never develop*

The executive and the man who wanted to work for him are of equal age; and both of them have worked about equally hard.

But the man who is an official of the successful company has had a definite purpose.

And the other man has worked vaguely, like a man in the dark—reaching out indefinitely after “something better” but not knowing just what it was he reached for.

Willing, well-meaning, industrious, he has traveled the road of good intentions, expecting that somehow opportunity would lie at its end.

And without even recognizing it, he has reached the end. He always feels that he is about to grasp his big opportunity.

Across his path they have written a single line: *This man has reached his limit*. And some day he will know that they have written it.

### *The joy of making definite progress*

The years in which a man's career and reputation are made or ruined are

painfully few. It is such a little period between the time when men ask “What can he do?” before they begin to ask “What has he done.”

In those years a man must somehow get the knowledge and the training that will enable him to handle larger affairs each year—to make *definite* progress.

It was with the purpose of aiding men to make this kind of progress that the Alexander Hamilton Institute was organized.

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### *Men whose testimony counts*

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Such men as: H. D. Carter, General Manager, Regal Shoe Co.; Francis A. Countway, President, Lever Brothers Company, makers of Lux and Life Buoy Soap; John J. Arnold, Vice-President, First National Bank of Chicago and scores of others.

Surely an Institution which elicits the praise of these men is worth your careful investigation at least.

### *You are paying—why not profit?*

For if you are letting a single year—yes, or even a single month, go by—with-

out definite business progress, you are paying a high price for training such as the Alexander Hamilton Institute can give. Paying in opportunities that pass you by because you have not the knowledge or self-confidence to grasp them. Paying in years of petty salary increases, when the increases might be large and permanent.

And the end of such years of paying comes some day, the end of the road of good intentions, when it is too late for definite, purposeful progress to begin.

### *Send for “Forging Ahead in Business”*

The Alexander Hamilton Institute is not for boys, not for drifters or men of feeble purpose. But for men who seriously seek to put themselves into the really worthwhile positions of business, it offers the fullest opportunity for investigation. A 116-page book has been published entitled “Forging Ahead in Business.” Thousands of men have found in it the key to new opportunity.

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Position



**Editorial Correction:** Owing to mechanical exigencies that developed *after* the cover of this issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE was printed, it became necessary to replace with the stories by Mr. Pelley and Mr. Marquis, those by Miss Lowe and Mr. McCutcheon, announced on the cover. The latter will be published in an early issue.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
Vol. XXXIV, No. 3

# THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

JANUARY  
1920

Cover Design, painted by Haskell Coffin. Art Section, Beautiful Women

## The Best Serial Novels of the Year

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TERMS: \$2.00 a year in advance; 20 cents a number. Foreign postage \$1.00 additional except on subscriptions for soldiers overseas on which there is no extra postage charge, the price for the subscription being the same as domestic subscriptions, viz., \$2.00 per year. Canadian postage 50c. Subscriptions are received by all news-dealers and booksellers, or may be sent direct to the Publisher. Remittances must be made by Post-office or Express Money Order, by Registered Letter, or by Postage Stamps of 2-cent denomination, and not by check or draft, because of exchange charges against the latter.

ADVERTISING FORMS close the 15th of the second preceding month (February forms close December 15th). Advertising rates on application.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**  
Do not subscribe to THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE through agents unknown to you personally, or you may find yourself defrauded. Many complaints are received from people who have paid cash to some swindler, in which event, of course, the subscription never reaches this office.

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# Why Do People Like William S. Hart and Dorothy Dalton



Dorothy Dalton  
Thomas H. Ince  
Star appearing  
in Paramount-  
Artcraft Pictures

## What Dr. Blackford Says

(Partial analysis made from photographs)

Miss Dalton has a particularly fine physical organization. She belongs to the vital-motive type. Note the roundness of her features and the fullness of her figure. The motive qualities show in the squareness of her face in full front view, and in the graceful poses and movements of her body. She has splendid recuperative power. This gives vivacity, responsive energies, warmth and enthusiasm of nature.

Miss Dalton is distinctly feminine in type. Note the slightly concave nose, tilted up at the end, the soft curves of her face and body, and the cupid-bow lips. Feminine characteristics are further shown in her large, soulful eyes, her long, curling lashes, and the subtle humor and coquetry in her facial expression.

Miss Dalton belongs to the convex type, with the exception of the nose, which is plane tending to concave. Convexity of features indicates keenness, quick responses, quickness in action and directness in speech. These qualities Miss Dalton manifests in her quick responsiveness to conditions of environment, in her quick comprehension of artistic values and her readiness to make the most of a dramatic situation.

She is very emotional and strongly sentimental, and appeals to these qualities in her audience. One loves Dorothy Dalton because she has the art of winning your affection through her heart appeal.

Paul Graham was a blond, and not until he had learned that there was all the difference in the world between the characteristics of a blond and those of a brunet did he discover the secret of making people like him.

Paul had been keeping books for years for a large corporation which had branches all over the country. It was generally thought by his associates that he would never rise above that job. He had a tremendous ability with figures—could wind them around his little finger—but he did not have the ability to mix with big men; did not know how to make people like him.

Then one day the impossible happened. Paul Graham became popular. Business men of importance who had formerly given him only a passing nod of acquaintance suddenly showed a desire for his friendship. People—even strangers—actually went out of their way to do things for him. Even he was astounded at his new power over men and women. Not only could he get them to do what he wanted them to do, but they actually anticipated his wishes and seemed eager to please him.

From the day the change took place, he began to go up in business. Now he is the Head Auditor for his corporation at an immense increase in salary. And all this came to him simply because he learned the secret of making people like him.

Another example—the case of a large manufacturing concern. Trouble sprang up at one of the factories. The men talked strike. Things looked ugly. Harry Winslow was sent to straighten it out. On the eve of a general walkout, he pacified the men and headed off the strike. And not only this, but ever since then, that factory has led all the others for production. He was able to do this, because he knew how to make these men like him and to do what he wanted them to do.

Another case, entirely different, is that of Henry Peters. Because of his ability to make people like him—his faculty for "getting under the skin" and making people think his way, he was given the position of Assistant to the President of a large firm. Two other men, both well liked by their fellow employees, had each expected to get the job. So when the outside man, Peters, came in, he was looked upon by everyone as an interloper and was openly disliked by every person in the office.

Peters was handicapped in every way. But in spite of that in three weeks he had made fast friends of

Independent Corporation  
119 West 40th Street  
New York City

Dear Sirs:

It was with great interest that I read Dr. Blackford's character analysis of Miss Dorothy Dalton. From a long acquaintance with Miss Dalton it gives me pleasure to say that Dr. Blackford has unerringly depicted Miss Dalton's characteristics.

Everyone knows of Miss Dalton's outstanding histrionic ability and personal charm, but this is the first time to my knowledge that anyone has stated the basis from which these personal qualities spring. I feel sure that Dr. Blackford's analysis will not only be interesting to everyone but informative as well.

Cordially yours,  
(Signed) B. E. SIEBEL,  
Manager to Miss Dalton.

What Miss Dalton's Manager Says

**W**HY is Dorothy Dalton so well loved by her followers? Why does William S. Hart attract and hold the admiration of almost every one? They both know the secret of making people like them.

If Dorothy Dalton and William S. Hart can do the thing that makes themselves liked by the most cosmopolitan audience in the world—people they never see—think how much easier it will be for you to master this ability—win the confidence and liking of the people with whom you come in contact.

You too can have the power of making people like you. For by the same method used by Dr. Blackford in analyzing Miss Dalton and Mr. Hart, you can, at a glance, tell the characteristics of any man, woman or child—tell instantly their likes and dislikes, and **YOU CAN MAKE PEOPLE LIKE YOU.** Here is how it is done.

Everyone you know can be placed in one of two general types—blond or brunet. There is as big a difference between the characteristics of a blond and those of a brunet as there is between night and day. You persuade a blond in one way—a brunet in another. Blondes enjoy one phase of life—brunets another. Blondes make good in one kind of job—brunets in one entirely different.

To know these differences scientifically is the first step in judging men and women; in getting on with them; mastering their minds; in making them like you; in winning their respect, admiration, love and friendship.

And when you have learned these differences—when you can tell at a glance just what to do and say to make any man or woman like you, your success in life is assured.



everyone in the house and had even won over the two men who had been most bitter against him. The whole secret is that he could tell in an instant how to appeal to any man and make himself well liked.

A certain woman who had this ability moved with her family to another town. As is often the case, it was a very difficult thing for any woman to break into the chill circle of society in this town if she was not known. But her ability to make people like her soon won for her the close friendship of many of the "best families" in the town. Some people wonder how she did it. It was simply the secret at work—the secret of judging people's characters and making them like you.

You realize, of course, that just knowing the difference between a blond and a brunet could not accomplish all these wonderful things. There are other things to be taken into account. But here is the whole secret.

You know everyone does not think alike. What one likes another dislikes. And what offends one pleases another. Well, there is your cue. You can make an instant "hit" with anyone if you say the things they want you to say and act the way they want you to act. Do this and they will surely like you and believe in you and go miles out of their way to PLEASE YOU.

You can do this easily by knowing certain simple signs. In addition to the difference in complexion every man, woman and child has written on them signs as distinct as though they were in letters a foot high, which show you from one quick glance exactly what to say and to do to please them—to get them to believe—to think as you think—to do exactly what you want them to do.

As unerringly as Dr. Blackford has told the characteristics of Miss Dalton and Mr. Hart you can tell the weak and strong points of character in everyone you meet.

In knowing these simple signs is the whole secret of getting what you want out of life—making friends of business and social advantage. Every great leader uses this method. That is why he IS a leader. Use it yourself and you will quickly become a leader—nothing can stop you.

You have heard before of Dr. Blackford the Character Analyst. Dr. Blackford's development and application of the science of Character Analysis has been built on a solid foundation of direct professional study of all kinds of men and women. After years of extensive consulting work among business concerns, merchants, manufacturers, Chambers of Commerce, and trade associations, Dr. Blackford made a trip around the world, observing widely different races, comparing notes with leading specialists of forty nations, comparing theories with such famous authorities as Alfred Haddon, Metchnikoff and Giuseppe Sergi, and studying the exhaustive records of Bertillon. So Dr. Blackford's store of ideas in the realm of human relations has become probably the most carefully arranged exhibit of facts on character study in the United States.

It is not surprising, therefore, that many concerns will not employ a man without first getting Dr. Blackford to pass on him. Concerns such as Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, Baker-Vawter Company, the Lauretinde Company, Ltd., and many others pay Dr. Blackford large annual fees for advice on dealing with human nature.

So great was the demand for these services, that Dr. Blackford could not even begin to fill all the engagements. So Dr. Blackford has explained the method in a simple seven-lesson course, entitled, "Reading Character at Sight." Even a half hour's reading of this wonderful course will give you an insight into human nature, and a power over people which will surprise you.

## What Dr. Blackford Says

[Partial analysis from photographs]

Mr. William S. Hart is a fine example of a keen intellect, dominating and directing both the activities of his muscles and the play of his emotions. This characteristic enables its possessor consciously and unerringly to express in the finest shadings of posture, gesture, walk, and features, just the meaning he wishes to convey.

This is shown, first, by the height, breadth and depth of his forehead and the keenness of his eye, indicating intellectual power of penetration; second by the length and firmness of his upper lip—indicating control of emotion—and the length and firmness of his chin, indicating control of physical activities.

Keen observation is shown in the fine development of the lower part of the forehead, which is prominent just above the eyes, while judgment of human nature is shown in the height of the forehead directly above the root of the nose.

It follows from this that he is keen, shrewd judge of human nature. He uses this knowledge of people not only to portray their joys, their sorrows, their passions, and their sympathies, but also as a basis for judgment as to what will please them in the pictures.

One of the most marked traits about Mr. Hart is his determination which is shown in the long, firm upper lip, the square, deep jaw, the straight, dogged cut of the lips across the face, and the high head.

His determination is backed by courage. Courage is shown in the long, large but well-balanced nose; the straight, level gaze; and the prominence of the lower end of the chin.

So we have in him a man who by keen observation and smoothly working intellect, fixes upon his purposes, who knows how to influence, persuade and direct people to play their parts in his plans, who has the courage to attempt big things and the determination to accomplish them in spite of difficulties and obstacles.

These are qualities which largely explain Mr. Hart's success in motion pictures, but he adds to them an unusual capacity for concentration. He not only starts, but no matter how disagreeable and difficult the job, he sticks and he finishes.



William S. Hart  
Star in Paramount-  
Aircraft Pictures

Independent Corporation  
119 West 40th Street  
New York City

Gentlemen:

I have carefully read Dr. Blackford's analysis of Mr. William S. Hart, and in the light of years' close personal acquaintance with him must say that I am amazed at the close accuracy with which Dr. Blackford depicts Mr. Hart's personal characteristics.

This analysis is all the more remarkable when it is realized that Dr. Blackford has never met Mr. Hart and that this character reading was made wholly from a photograph.

Yours truly,

(Signed) E. H. ALLEN,  
Manager.

What Mr. Hart's Manager says

Such confidence have the publishers in Dr. Blackford's Course, "Reading Character at Sight," that they will gladly send it to you on approval, all charges prepaid. Look it over thoroughly. See if it lives up to all the claims made for it. If you do not want to keep it, then return it and the transaction is closed. And if you decide to keep it—as you surely will—then merely remit five dollars in full payment.

Remember, you take no risk, you assume no obligation to buy.

The entire course goes to you on approval. You have everything to gain—nothing to lose. So mail the coupon NOW, and learn how to make people like you, while this remarkable offer is still on.

**Free Examination Coupon**

**Independent Corporation**  
Publishers of the Independent Weekly  
Dept. B361, 119 West 40th St. NEW YORK

You may send me Dr. Blackford's Course of seven lessons entitled "Reading Character at Sight." I will either remail the course to you within five days after its receipt, or send you \$5 in full payment of the Course.

Name .....

Address .....

Red Book 1-28

# The Man with a Million Dollar Memory

How Any Man Can Improve His Memory in a Single Evening of Solid Fun

**A** MAN must have a pretty good memory to have it assessed at a million dollars. And yet this is what I have heard business men say was a small valuation of the memory of one of our big industrial leaders.

The man I refer to is one of the giants of American Business. He is the president of one of the largest corporations in the world and one whose employees run into the hundred thousands.

Ask this man anything about the history of his business—about the details of production in any one of his plants—about the characteristics of his thousands of important employees—or in fact ask him anything you can think of in relation to his business and its complex ramifications, and he comes back with the figures and facts without an instant's hesitation.

All who know this great man—and there is not a man in America who doesn't know him—say that perhaps the greatest factor in his marvelous success is his *memory*.

## Memory and Good Judgment

Good judgment is largely a matter of memory. It is easy to make the right decisions if you have *all* the related facts outlined in your mind—clearly and exactly.

Wrong decisions in business are made because the man who makes them forgets some vital facts or figure which, had he been able to summon clearly to mind, would have changed his viewpoint.



DAVID M. ROTH

## The Power of Memory

A man's experience in business is only as old as his memory. The measure of his ability is largely his power to remember at the right time. Two men who have been in a certain business will vary greatly in their experience and value.

If you can remember—clearly and accurately—the solution of every important problem since you first took hold of your work, you can make *all* of your experience count.

If, however, you have not a good memory and cannot recall instantly facts and figures that you learned years ago you cannot make your experience count.

There is no asset in business more important than a good memory. The man referred to at the beginning of this ar-

ticle, whose memory is said to be easily worth a million dollars, knows more about his business than any other man in his field because he has been able to remember everything he has ever learned.

## Mr. Roth's Amazing Memory Feats

Any man, woman or child of average intelligence can easily and quickly acquire a sure and exact memory.

When David M. Roth, the famous expert, first determined to cultivate his memory he did it because he had a *poor* memory. He actually could not remember a man's name twenty seconds. He forgot so many things that he knew he could not succeed unless he did learn how to remember.

Today there are over ten thousand people in the United States whom Mr. Roth has met at different times—most of them only once—whom he can name instantly on sight. Mr. Roth can, and has, hundreds of times at dinners, and lectures, asked from fifty to one hundred people to tell him their name and telephone numbers, and business connections, and then, after turning his back while they changed seats, has picked each one out by name and told him his telephone number and business.

These are only a few of the scores of other equally "impossible" things that Mr. Roth does—and yet a few years ago he could not remember a man's name twenty seconds. *You* too can do these wonderful things.

## A Better Memory in One Evening

Mr. Roth's system, which he has developed through years of study, and which he has taught in class to thousands of business men and others throughout the country in person, is so easy that a twelve-year-old child can learn it, and it is more real fun than any game you play solely for pleasure.

Not only will you enjoy every moment you spend on this wonderful Course but so will your entire family—even the small children can join in the fun.

You get results in the first few moments. Fifteen minutes after you start the first lesson you will see an amazing difference in your power to remember. And a single evening spent on the first lesson will absolutely double your memory power—and and may do even more, just as it has for thousands of others.

Just think what this will mean to you—to have twice

*Terrence J. McManus, of the firm of Olcott, Bonyng, McManus & Ernst, Attorneys and Counsellors at Law, 170 Broadway, and one of the most famous trial lawyers in New York, says:*

"May I take occasion to state that I regard your service in giving this system to the world as a public benefaction. The wonderful simplicity of the method, and the ease with which its principles may be acquired, especially appeal to me. I may add that I have already had occasion to test the effectiveness of the first two lessons in the preparation for trial of an important action in which I am about to engage."

"I have examined and used the Roth Memory Course and I wish to tell you how pleased I am with it. I have seven systems of memory training, every one of them of some value, some of very great value; but the Roth course introduces a new principle which excels them all. It is as simple as it is effective."

FRANK W. COLLIER,  
The American University,  
Washington, D. C.

"Memory Course received. Learned lesson No. 1 in one evening. Enjoyed it as much as I did 'Oliver Twist' or 'Mary Pickford,' and have more as a result to think about and a better thinker to think with to boot."

W. H. C. JOHNSON,  
Macon, Ga.

## Remember Instantly

Name and Faces	Business Figures
What You Read	Statistics
Speeches and Notes	Facts
Talks	References
Business Details	Sermons and Lectures
Selling Points	Business Reports
Legal Points	Good Stories
Conversations	School Lessons
Pictures	Household Duties
History and Dates	Business
Streets and Numbers	Appointments
	Social Engagements

as good a memory—to have a memory that will enable you instantly to see a new world of facts, figures, faces, addresses, phone numbers, selling points, data and all kinds of mental pictures with less than one hundredth of the effort you now spend in trying to remember without success.

The reason Mr. Roth can guarantee to double your memory in one evening is because he gives you the boiled down, crystallized secret right at the start—then how far you care to go in further multiplying your ability to remember will depend simply on how far you want to go—you can easily and quickly develop your memory to such an extent that you can do everything Mr. Roth can do. He makes the act of remembering an easy, natural, automatic process of the mind.

## Try Before You Buy

So confident are the publishers, the Independent Corporation, of the remarkable value of the Roth Memory Course to readers of this magazine that they want you to test out this remarkable system in your own home before you decide to buy. The Course must sell itself to you by actually increasing your memory before you obligate yourself to spend a penny.

## Only \$5 If You Keep It

Mr. Roth's fee for personal instruction to classes limited to fifty members is \$1,000, but in order to secure nationwide distribution for the Roth Memory Mail Course in a single season the publishers have put the price at only \$5. The Course contains the very same material in permanent form that is given in the personal \$1,000 class.

And bear in mind—you don't have to pay even the small fee asked unless after a test in your own home you decide to keep it.

## Send No Money

Don't send a single penny. Merely fill out and mail the coupon. By return post, all charges prepaid, the complete Roth Memory Course will be sent to your home.

Study it one evening—more if you like—then if you feel that you can afford not to keep this great aid to more dollars—to bigger responsibilities—to fullest success in life, mail it back to the publishers within five days and you will owe nothing. If a better memory means only one-tenth as much to you as it has to thousands of other business men and women, mail the coupon today—NOW—but don't put it off and forget—as those who need the Course the very worst are apt to do. Send the coupon in or write a letter now before the low introductory price is withdrawn.

## Independent Corporation

*Publishers of the Independent Weekly*  
Dept. R361, 119 W. 40th St., New York

Please send me the Roth Memory Course of seven lessons. I will either remail the Course to you within five days after its receipt or send you \$5 in full payment of the Course.

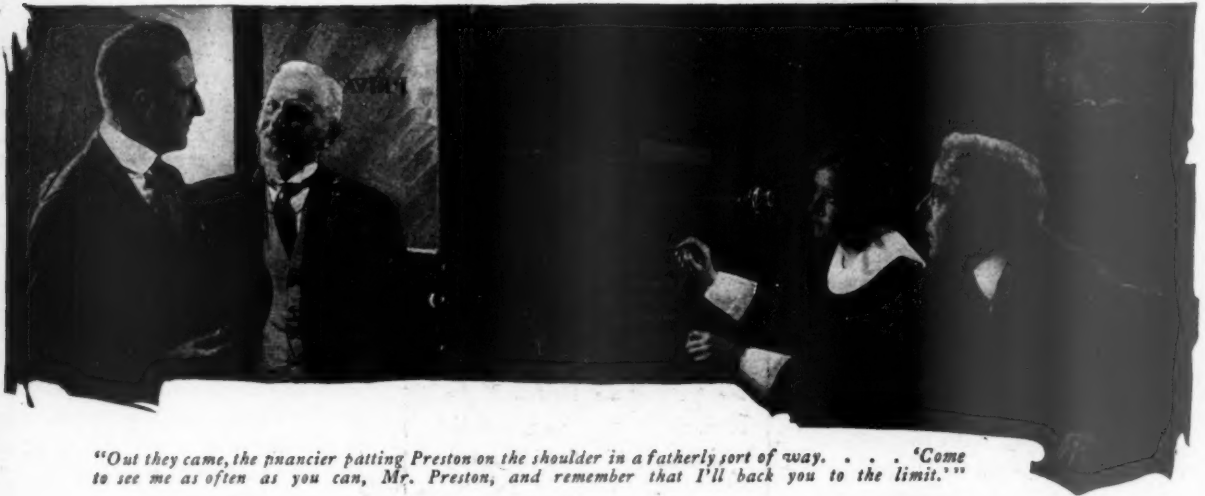
Name .....

Address .....

P. O. ....

State ..... Red Book 1-20





"Out they came, the financier patting Preston on the shoulder in a fatherly sort of way. . . . 'Come to see me as often as you can, Mr. Preston, and remember that I'll back you to the limit.'"

## The Most Convincing Talker I Ever Met

Everywhere this man goes, people shower him with favors and seek his friendship. Things which other people ask for and are refused, he gets instantly. How he does it is told in this amazing story.

LET me ask you this: There is a big business deal to be put through. It involves millions of dollars. Putting it through depends wholly on one thing—getting the backing of a great financier.

But this man is bitterly opposed to your idea and to your associates. Seven of the most able men and women in all America have tried to win over this financier. They failed dismally and completely.

Now, could you, a total stranger to this man, walk in on him unannounced, talk for less than an hour, and then have him take your arm as a token of friendship, and give you a signed letter agreeing to back you to the limit.

Could you?

ASTOUNDING? Yes! But it WAS done. And I'll tell you how. Here is the way it all came about. For a long time the directors of our company had felt the handicap of limited capital. We had business in sight running into a million dollars a month. But we couldn't finance this volume of sales.

We simply had to get big backing, and that was all there was to it.

Because of trade affiliations, one man—a great financier in New York—controlled the situation. Win him over and the rest was easy. But how to win him?—that was the question. No less than five men and two women—all people of influence and reputation—had tried. They were all repulsed—turned down cold and flat.

You know how a thing of this sort grows on you and how bitter utter defeat is. Well, we were talking it over at a board meeting when one of our directors announced that he knew of only one man who could possibly put through the deal—a man by the name of Preston.

So it was agreed that Preston was to be sounded out at luncheon the following day. He proved to be a fine type of American. At 34 years of age he had become president and majority stockholder of a thriving manufacturing business rated at three-quarters of a million dollars.

Preston was deeply interested, as anyone would be over the prospect of closing such a big deal. The director in question said casually, "Why don't you run down to New York and take a shot at it, Preston?" Preston looked out of the window for a moment, and then quietly answered, "You're on."

I WENT along with Preston simply as a matter of form to represent our interests. Aboard the 10:25 train out of Chicago, we headed for the smoker and got to talking with the crowd there.

Then I noticed something. Preston had dominated them all. Everyone was eagerly hanging on his words, and looking at him with open admiration. No sooner would he stop talking than one of the men would start him up again. And as the men dropped off at stations along the way they gave Preston their cards, with pressing invitations to look them up. No doubt about it, Preston was *THE* man aboard that car.

The colored porter, too, came under his sway. For that night, when the berths were being made up, the porter came unasked to Preston, told him that his berth was right over the car trucks, and insisted upon changing it to a more comfortable one.

And so it went all the way to New York. Everyone who met Preston took a great liking to him the instant he spoke. They seemed to be eager for his companionship—wanted to be with him every minute, openly admired him, and loaded him with favors.

Even the usual haughty room clerk at the hotel showed a great interest in Preston's welfare. He showered us with attention while a long line of people waited to register.

The next morning we called on the great financier—the man who was so bitterly against us and had flatly turned down seven of our shrewd influential representatives.

I waited in the reception room—nervous, restless, with pins and needles running up and down my spine. Surely Preston would meet the same humiliating fate?

But no! In less than an hour out they came, arm in arm, the financier patting Preston on the shoulder in a fatherly sort of way. And then I heard the surprising words, "Come to see me as often as you can, Mr. Preston, and remember that I'll back you to the limit!"

AT the hotel that night sleep wouldn't come. I couldn't get the amazing Preston out of my thoughts. What an irresistible power over men's minds he had. Didn't even have to ask for what he wanted! People actually competed for his attention, anticipated his wishes and eagerly met them. What a man! What power! . . . Then the tremendous possibilities of it all—think what could be done with such power.

What was the secret? For secret there must be. So the first thing next morning I hurried to Preston's room, told him my thoughts, and asked him the secret of his power.

Preston laughed good-naturedly. "Nothing to it—I—well—that—is—" he stalled. "I don't like to talk about myself, but I've simply mastered the knack of talking convincingly, that's all."

"But how did you get the knack?" I persisted.

Preston smiled, and said, "Well, there's an organization in New York that tells you exactly how to do it. It's amazing! There's really nothing to study. It's mostly a knack which they tell you. You can learn this knack in a few hours. And in less than a week it will produce definite results in your daily work."

"Write to this organization—The Independent Corporation—and get their method. They send it on free trial. I'll wager that in a few weeks from now you'll have a power over men which you never thought possible . . . but write and see for yourself." And that was all I could get out of the amazing Preston.

WHEN I returned home I sent for the method Preston told me about. It opened my eyes and

astounded me. Just how he had won over the financier was now as clear as day to me. I began to apply the method to my daily work, and soon I was able to wield the same remarkable power over men and women that Preston had. I don't like to talk about my personal



"At luncheon one of our directors said, 'Why don't you run down to New York and take a shot at it, Preston!' And Preston answered, 'You're on!'"

achievements any more than Preston does, but I'll say this:

When you have acquired the knack of talking convincingly it's easy to get people to do anything you want them to do. That's how Preston impressed those people on the train—how he got special attention from the hotel clerk—how he won over the financier—simply by talking convincingly.

This knack of talking convincingly will do wonders for any man or woman. Most people are afraid to express their thoughts; they know the humiliation of talking to people and of being ignored with a casual nod or a "yes" or "no." But when you can talk convincingly, it's different. When you talk people listen and listen eagerly. You can get people to do almost anything you want them to do. And the beauty of it all is that they think they are doing it of their own free will.

In committee meetings, or in a crowd of any sort you can rivet the attention of all when you talk. You can force them to accept your ideas. It helps wonderfully in writing business letters—enables you to write sales letters that amaze everyone by the big orders they pull in.

Then again it helps in social life. Interesting and convincing talk is the basis of social success. At social affairs you'll always find that the

convincing talker is the center of attraction, and that people go out of their way to "make up" to him.

Talk convincingly and no man—no matter who he is—will ever treat you with cold, unresponsive indifference. Instead, you'll instantly get under his skin, make his heart glow and set fire to his enthusiasms. Talk convincingly and any man—even a stranger—will treat you like an old pal and will literally take the shirt off his back to please you.

You can get anything you want if you know how to talk convincingly. You've noticed that in business ability alone won't get you much. Many a man of real ability, who cannot express himself well, is often outdistanced by a man of

mediocre ability who knows how to talk convincingly. There's no getting away from it, to get ahead—merely to hold your own—to get what your ability entitles you to, you've got to know how to talk convincingly!

THE method Preston told me about is Dr. Law's "Mastery of Speech," published by the Independent Corporation. Such confidence have the publishers in the ability of Dr. Law's method to make you a convincing talker that they will gladly send it to you wholly on approval.

You needn't send any money—not a cent. Merely mail the coupon, or write a letter, and the complete Course "Mastery of Speech," will be sent you by return mail, all charges prepaid. If you are not entirely satisfied with it, send it back any time within five days after you receive it and you will owe nothing.

"At social affairs you'll always find that the convincing talker is the center of attraction."

**Independent Corporation**  
Publishers of the Independent Weekly  
Dept. L-361. 119 W. 40th St. New York

Please send me Dr. Frederick Houk Law's "Mastery of Speech," a Course in Business Talking and Public Speaking in eight lessons. I will either remit the Course to you within five days after its receipt, or send you \$5 in full payment of the Course.

Name.....  
Address.....Red Book-1-20

# Dandruff?

## *Well, do you mean to tolerate it?*

**D**O you really want to *get rid of dandruff*? Packer's Tar Soap can help you—but you must meet “Packer's” half-way. For there is no “royal road” to a dandruffless scalp.

Patience, perseverance and “Packer's” help to get the better of dandruff every time.

Your first shampoo with “Packer's” will start new vitality in your scalp tissues—new powers of resistance, if you please. Each succeeding shampoo will strengthen this resistance—confirm this vitality.

Dandruff cannot permanently abide the attacks of the Packer pine-tar lather, worked into your scalp with the tips of your fingers. Your finger-tips, remember! Stiff brushes only irritate the scalp and encourage the development of dandruff.

Regular use of Packer's Tar Soap in shampooing prevents dandruff by correcting the conditions which commonly foster its growth. It also makes your hair and scalp *healthier* and *improves their vitality*.

Write for our Manual, “The Hair and Scalp—Modern Care and Treatment,” 36 pages of practical information. Sent free on request. For sample half-cake of Packer's Tar Soap, send ten cents.

## PACKER'S TAR SOAP

*“Pure as the Pines”*

PACKER'S LIQUID TAR SOAP, delicately perfumed, cleanses delightfully and refreshes the scalp—keeping the hair soft and attractive. Liberal sample bottle 10 cents.

THE PACKER MFG. CO., Dept. 83A, 120 West 32nd Street, New York City

*Packer products are sold by druggists everywhere*



# *It Ruined Michelangelo: and It Can Ruin You*

*A Common-sense Editorial by BRUCE BARTON*

LINCOLN said a wonderfully wise thing one day.

"I have talked with great men," he said, "and I cannot see wherein they differ from others."

Too many of us have a distorted notion of great men: we see them only on their successful side, and imagine that they have no other. As a matter of fact, the great man is precisely like ourselves, a mixture of success and failure, of joy and deep depression. And very often if we would study him upon the side of his failures, we might learn more useful lessons than those that his successes teach.

No greater genius existed in his generation than Michelangelo. With such magnificent abilities he should have been a happy man: yet he was of all men most miserable. His letters abound in melancholy laments.

What was the secret of his misery? Failure to apply himself? From boyhood into old age he worked incessantly.

Extravagance? He denied himself even the ordinary comforts, to say nothing of the luxuries of life.

No, his tragedy lay within himself—partly in a pessimistic temperament inherited from his father, but chiefly in this fatal weakness: *he never had the spiritual courage to say "No!"*

Before he had well begun one work, he allowed his patrons to force other commissions upon him. He undertook too many things. And as a result, in agony of spirit over promises unfulfilled, over work begun

and left half done, he passed his miserable days.

Modern society is in a conspiracy to ruin men as Michelangelo was ruined. It comes with a thousand conflicting claims.

"Be chairman of this," it asks; or "Go on this committee;" or "Leave what you are doing and tackle this new job."

And no man accomplishes anything really worth while unless he learns early to harden his will and to utter that little word *no*.

"How did you come to discover the law of gravitation?" a pretty woman asked Sir Isaac Newton.

"By constantly thinking about it, madam," the great man replied.

NEWTON might have served on a hundred committees; he might have invented a patent churn; he might have made some money in the stock-market in those years when he was "constantly thinking" about gravitation. But he held himself firm to his single purpose, and did the great thing, resolutely refusing the thousand tempting diversions.

It's a curious fact that most children learning to talk can say "no" long before they can utter the syllable "yes." Yet men find it so easy to say yes and almost impossible to say no.

In that fact lies the secret of many failures. It ruined Michelangelo—that fatal inability to say "No!" And it will ruin any man who does not set himself resolutely on guard against it.

There will be another editorial by Bruce Barton on this page next month, concerning a man who knew one of our Presidents so well that "He Called the President Charley."



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THE goodness of Ivory Soap is reflected in the lustrous hair, the soft, smooth skin, and the fresh, dainty garments of the well-groomed woman.

Her hair keeps its beautiful natural gloss because Ivory's thick lather is so pure and mild that it cleanses the scalp thoroughly without affecting its nourishing oils.

Her skin stays soft and fine and velvety because Ivory contains no free alkali nor any other harsh ingredient that can make it rough or red, or enlarge the pores. The most vigorous cleansing with Ivory Soap cannot irritate.

Her fairest garments retain their original beauty because Ivory Soap does not fade their colors nor injure their fabrics or trimmings.



IT FLOATS

## IVORY SOAP

### 99<sup>44</sup>/<sub>100</sub> % PURE

Have you tried the new form of Ivory Soap—IVORY SOAP FLAKES? They make "Safe Suds in a Second" for fine laundry work and the shampoo. TRIAL SIZE PACKAGE FREE. Just send your name and address to Department 28-A, The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati, O.



JANUARY, 1920  
Vol. XXXIV, Number 3

THE  
**RED BOOK**  
MAGAZINE

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN  
Editor



Jane Lang wanted to take stock of her wares and to appraise them, to satisfy herself that she was marketable.

CHAPTER I

A LARGE man, upwards of six feet tall and powerful of build, approached one of the stairways leading to a station of the elevated in the Loop in Chicago. It was so dark under the structure that his features were indistinct, but even as a figure seen dimly, he was distinctive and arresting. Perhaps it was his hat: there is more individuality and character in a hat than in any other article of modern wearing-apparel; a man has but to affect a hat a trifle different from the common run to be regarded by the crowd as eccentric, as a character, as a person of distinction. More than one man owes success or failure in life to his choice of headgear. This hat was soft, light gray, and broad of brim—of the sort one associates with Southern colonels or wealthy cattle-raisers from the West. It sat well upon the big man, seeming to be eminently fitting and appropriate rather than eccentric or conspicuous.

In the middle of the block a second figure appeared, slouching out from the blackness surrounding a pillar of the elevated, and in the whining tone of the mendicant addressed the wearer of the big gray hat.

"Mister," said the figure, "wont you gimme somethin'? I got two sons in the army, and the Missis is down with flu, and I jest got out of bed with it. Haint able scarce to move. Lost my job out to the stockyards. 'Taint for me I'm askin', but the

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AGAINST the background of today's interest in the struggle between Capital and Labor the author of "The Little Moment of Happiness" tells of the part played in that struggle by a girl, in what is by far his greatest novel.

# A DAUGHTER of DISCONTENT

By CLARENCE  
BUDINGTON KELLAND

Illustrated by FRANK STREET

Missis has got to have medicine and stuff, and—I got to git money, Mister."

The big man stopped and looked down at the beggar. Then he thrust his hand into his trousers pocket and held it before the beggar's eyes. The palm was full of silver of various denominations, and there were several crumpled bills.

"Help yourself, friend," he said gravely.

The beggar looked at the extended hand, then up at the big man's face. He put forward his own hand and drew it back; evidently this was a new situation in his experience, and it non-plused him.

"What you mean—help myself?" he grumbled.

"Why, you have told me a story and say you need money. There it is. You know how much you need better than I do. I might give you something, of course, but it might be less than you need, and that wouldn't be fair to you; or it might be more than you need, and that wouldn't be fair to me. If you've told the truth, you're welcome to what you take; if you haven't told the truth, you hurt nobody but yourself by stealing from me. I haven't time to investigate your story—so help yourself, friend."

"You—you mean I kin take whatever I want to?"

"All of it, if you need it. You know best."

The man's hand moved out toward the money but paused and dropped. "Say, what you handin' me, anyhow?"

"I mean exactly what I say. Either you're telling the truth, in which case you will know what to help yourself to, and will be honest about it; or your story is a lie, and whatever you take will be robbing me. You know. I don't. So help yourself."

Once more the man looked furtively into the big man's face; then he drew back a step, his own features working with rage. "Oh, go to hell!" he said savagely, and shuffled away into the darkness.

The big man stood looking after him a moment, replaced the



money in his pocket, and walked gravely on to the stairway. He mounted to the platform above, and boarded a train which carried him toward Evanston. In the light of the car his features became visible at last. The first impression one received was that he was hideous. His forehead bulged; his eyebrows were extraordinarily thick and bushy; his nose had been broken at some time, and while not flattened like the typical pugilist's nose, nevertheless followed an eccentric line down his face. His lips were thick and heavy, and his chin protruding.

It was not until one had watched his face, rather fascinated by its homeliness, that a new impression began to grow, a favorable impression. One became conscious of being drawn to the man. His eyes were clear and gray and vivid—and boyish. There was something thoughtfully sorrowful about the face; some reflection from the soul of the man vivified it, stamped it with the seal of fidelity. It was a contradictory face, for it was both ascetic and abounding with life; it was the face of a dreamer and of a man of action. It was the face of a man who would die at the stake for a principle, and the face of a man who would roll and romp on the floor with a baby. It was the face of a man who could be tender and beautiful in love, but terrible in anger, unyielding when once a position was taken. If one were to demand a dominant note, one quality which overshadowed all others, as some one quality must dominate every human being, the observer would be forced to the conclusion that it was altruism.

The conductor came in presently to collect the extra fare to Evanston. He stopped beside the big gray hat, and his manner was respectful, as the manner of conductor on a public conveyance is seldom respectful.

"Good evening, Comrade Lang," he said.

"Good evening, comrade," responded Lang. "How is the new baby?"

"To think of your remembering! He's fine—fine, comrade."

The conductor seemed to derive especial pleasure from this method of address, which somehow brought him into a sort of intimacy with this man he admired.

"I'm afraid I'm not entitled to be called comrade any more," said Lang with a grave smile. "You know, they've expelled me from the party."

"You and Spargo and Russell! When they did that, they kicked me out too—so we're comrades just the same."

"The work and teaching of years!" said Lang sadly. "Undone in a day! Now we must start at the beginning again."

The train came to a creaking stop, and Lang alighted, descended the stairs and turning to the right, passed under the railroad. He walked, not slowly, but gravely, until he reached a cottage on a shaded street and turned in. There was a light in the front of the house. Lang admitted himself and stepped into the modest living-room which was more a library than a parlor, for every available inch of its wall-space was hidden by books.

"Not in bed yet, Jane?" he said.

"I waited up to see you, Father. I had to see you to-night."

LANG looked down at his daughter, delighting as he always delighted in her slender beauty. There were times when he wished she were not so beautiful, that she were plain, capable, less vivid and colorful. It is a task of sufficient difficulty for a man left wifeless to bring up a homely daughter; but no man is capable of overseeing the life of a girl of exceptional beauty, for the more beautiful a woman is, the more feminine she must be, and the more feminine, the less comprehensible to any man—to a father least of all.

Jane was not merely pretty; she was wonderful. Not one feature had she derived from her father; only hints and vague traces of her mother were to be found. It was not alone beauty of face, but that more dangerous marvel of a faultless body which was hers. It was the sort of beauty which holds men breathless and compels them to stare and to covet. And Jane Lang knew that this was true. She was aware of her possessions, not vainly aware, but she knew. She knew that the dull red of her hair, the brown of her eyes, the perfection of her lips, the curve of her bosom, were assets to be set down in the ledger of her life, not for their esthetic value alone, but for their cash value on the money market—or even on the open market. Knowing these things, she was filled with resentment toward life, but especially toward her father, who prevented her from following the way of her ambitions and desires.

Jane Lang was twenty-two.

She stood up, facing her father, and her air was the timorous defiance of youth. "I have taken a position," she said.

Her father did not answer at once, but looked down at her

curiously. His face expressed neither regret nor anger, but rather perplexity.

"Why have you done that, Jane?" he asked presently.

She replied passionately: "Because I want to get away from all this." She swept her hand about to indicate the household. "It makes me feel as if I were stifling in a swamp. I want to see things, to be *in* things. I despise this, all of it—the housework, the monotony, the sort of people who come here, and the things they talk about. I want to know human beings—*young* people who take some interest in themselves and who know how to enjoy themselves. I'm bored to death with socialism and proletariats and arguments and statistics. I'm young, and you can't understand that. And I want to live. Here I'm nothing but a domestic servant."

"I don't believe your mother ever considered herself a domestic servant," said her father gravely; "and you have taken her place."

"My mother was your *wife*," said Jane, making a distinction which her father groped for but was unable to touch. "I've never had anything. I've never lived like other girls. I couldn't go away to college—because the money was needed for *socialism*." She accented the word bitterly. "When I was a little girl, other children twitted me because you were a socialist. More than once children have been forbidden to play with me—and even now people look at me queerly and whisper about me. . . . But that isn't the worst. I want things; I want to do things. I'm going to get away from this life and stay away from it. There's just one way that I can see, and that is to marry. Yes, *marry!*" Her voice rose a trifle and became tremulous. "I know you're shocked, but I'm going out to look for a husband—a husband who can give me everything I want. Money—"

"Do you care so much for money?" He asked this with grave curiosity.

"Not for money—but for the things money can buy me. I want to be happy. If I could be happy without money—I don't know what makes people happy, for I've never been happy. Money is the only chance I see. I'm going to find a man with lots of it and marry him. . . . Look at me, Father; don't you think a rich man would be willing to marry me?"

"Yes," he said, "you are beautiful, Jane. I wish you were less beautiful."

"I've stood it as long as I can. I'm twenty-two. I made up my mind days ago, and I've been looking for a position. I've found it—and I'm going to take it. . . . I know what you think, and what you want me to do. You'd like to have me stay here forever, doing your housework and taking your dictation and transcribing your lectures and your books. That's why you had me taught stenography. You've had a secretary for nothing, and a housekeeper thrown in—and what did I get in return? My board and clothes!"

"Have I seemed as selfish as that to you, daughter?"

SHE made no direct answer. "I'm of age. I know what I want, and I have the right to try to get it. You needn't try to forbid me to go to work, for I'm going. I'm going to do what I want to if I have to leave this house and live in the attic of some boarding-house."

"You would do that? You would leave me alone?" This was not so much a question to her as an exclamation following a discovery. "This is so important to you that you would leave your father and your home?"

"I'd leave a dozen fathers and a dozen homes."

"It will not be necessary, daughter," he said gently. "Where is this position?"

"I'm to be stenographer to Abner Islip's private secretary. It's a very good position. The sort of work I've done helped me to get it."

"Then I haven't been altogether a detriment to you," said Lang with a hint of whimsicality which was just over the border-line from sadness. He paused. "I'm sorry, daughter. You might have been happier, more contented, if your mother had lived. I'm afraid I've bungled your life. It ought not to have come to this pass. . . . Now there is nothing I can say. You have told me your intentions, and I cannot prevent you from doing as you choose; I don't believe I should do so if I could. . . . But I wish you were less beautiful, daughter. Of course you will not leave your home. It is *your* home. It will always be your home."

"You are trying a perilous experiment, daughter," Lang went on. "People are often hurt in experiments. I do not think you mean a great deal that you have said. You have implied that you would buy wealth with your beauty, child—and that would be the most perilous experiment of all. . . . I have been

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Lang looked at her curiously. "Why have you done that, Jane?" he asked presently. She replied passionately: "Because I want to get away from all this. I want to see things, to be *in* things."

a failure as a father—perhaps because my mind has been too much on other matters. I am sorry, daughter—and I wish you all good fortune and all happiness from your venture—all fortune and all happiness."

He looked down at her wistfully, and she in her turn regarded him curiously, even suspiciously. His surrender had been too lacking in reluctance. She had steeled herself for a struggle, and there had been no struggle. She had more than half expected to leave the house in a rage, never to return to it. Now she felt uneasy; she almost pitied her father.

"Good night, Jane," he said.

"Good night, Father."

When she had left the room, Daniel Lang seated himself in his worn armchair. . . . The clock struck twelve. . . . It struck one, and he was still there, motionless.

Social ambition was something Daniel Lang was incapable of understanding. His ambitions were all for the race *en masse*, and though the desire of any man or woman to better his condition and to acquire wider opportunities of personal expression and of personal participation in the benefits of life—to free himself from life's sordid and disagreeable aspects—was perfectly comprehensible to him, his daughter's craving for luxuries, and even more, her craving to take a position among the socially favored, was far beyond his perception. What was it she wanted? That was the question he asked himself again and again—more frequently as Jane's years increased, and as he saw that their relations were moving toward some inevitable climax or even catastrophe.

Jane herself could not have told him in concrete form what it was she wanted. The nearest she approached it, even in her own thoughts, was to say that she wanted to be somebody. Her individuality urged her to assert herself. She had known a period when the stage appealed to her; her mirror had told her she was equipped for the stage, at least for a certain manifestation of the modern theater. But that had been transitory; even at its height, her leaning toward the stage had shown her the theater only as a means to an end—a means of showing herself, of advertising her wares, of placing herself in a position to be admired by those by whom it would be profitable to be admired.

She was not mercenary. It was not money alone, nor money chiefly, that she wanted. She was not immoral in thought, because she was too young and far too inexperienced to be immoral. One has to know and appreciate the sordid things of life to be immoral. One might have said that she was too vain to be immoral, but that was doing her much less than simple justice. She was not admirable at this period of her life, but she was not less admirable than half the young women of her age. Even though she had infinitely more to be vain over than most, she was not vain. She was not silly, but on the contrary possessed a certain solid, practical vein that always looked to the future and to consequences. The most dangerous manifestation of her character was that she, as a business woman, regarded herself as a commodity which should be so advertised and marketed as to realize the utmost dollar of its worth—in living, in possessing, in enjoying, and in being.

It was natural that she should desire to wear clothes which were in keeping with her face and body. It would have been abnormal had she been otherwise. She desired pleasures, such pleasures as she saw less beautiful, less intelligent girls than herself enjoying without an effort to obtain. She was young, perfect in health, and she felt that she was denied those things to which youth and health and beauty are most clearly entitled. She did not understand her father, nor her father's life, nor his thoughts. To her he was a man who deprived her of things he could easily give her, because he was a trifle mad upon an absurdity. She detested socialism; her father had given his life to socialism. She was ashamed of it, as she would have been ashamed of him if he had worn the prison brand, or as if he had taken her to a public



dining-place and there eaten his pie with his knife.

Her most frequent protests to her father had been that he would not allow her to go out and try to make some sort of place for herself. She did not want to work for work's sake, nor

for the money she could earn. She wanted to work because that would give her a sure contact with life and with men—and of what good is beauty if there are not men to admire and to desire! Instead of this, Daniel Lang had insisted upon her remaining in their home to take the place of his wife as head of his small household.

AS a matter of fact, Jane Lang did not know herself. She did not know what good she was capable of, nor what evil she might descend to. She had not studied her own character, and was as unaware as her father of what qualities of strength she had inherited from him and from that splendid, self-sacrificing, faithful woman—her mother. All she knew was that she was dissatisfied, discontented, tingling with a desire to plunge into life.

If Daniel Lang could have seen his daughter after she entered her room, his reflections would have been more disquieting than they were. Jane closed the door behind her and stood quietly in the middle of the chamber as if arrested by a thought. Then she walked to the long mirror set in her closet door, lighted every light in the room, and stood there studying herself as one might study a picture one was considering the purchase of. She fetched a large hand-mirror from her dresser, and by its aid scrutinized her profile, the back of her head, as much of herself as could by any makeshift be made visible to her. This, Daniel Lang inevitably would have set down to vanity.

It was not vanity; it was inventory; it was a business measure. Jane Lang wanted to take stock of her wares and to appraise them, to satisfy herself that she was marketable. She was twenty-two, and as is usual with twenty-two, she had not reasoned with a use of all her premises; nor had she reached a fraction of the logical conclusions. Her view was that she wanted some unidentified and vague thing, and that her beauty was the trap that would catch it for her. That was all she saw. It was all her inexperience was capable of seeing. That beauty without certain other attributes of mind, of heart, of character, is only an ephemeral commodity, marketable briefly and at bargain prices, she did not know. She fancied her beauty would purchase a maximum of the thing she yearned for, and that was neither more nor less than fullness of life, beauty of life. She did not know that beauty without equivalent beauty of heart and of thought can purchase only the stale crumbs from the tables of those who live richly.

Strangely enough, such a factor as love did not vex her. It had no part in her plans, and went unconsidered. She, in her girlish and immature way, fancied she was cold, hard, mercenary, that her life was to be modified by no emotions, and that as one markets his crop of wheat or his horse or his automobile, she would market the wonderful thing Nature had given her. Jane knew less about herself than she knew about the Dowager Empress of China.



She walked away from her mirror and sat down on her bed. Presently she found herself thinking about her father, reviewing his words and conduct during the interview just ended. She was astonished and ashamed to find that her eyes were filling. Jane had been sorry for herself; now, unaccountably, she was sorry for her father. She was conscious of a tenderness for him that she

by romantic perils but nevertheless leading to hidden treasure at the end.

She had no interest in the thing she was to do, in the work she was to perform. Her salary did not interest her greatly, except as supplying munitions of war for her expedition into life. It would buy clothes she coveted and help her so to embellish her loveliness that her adventure would be forwarded; that was all. The work was merely a necessary adjunct to her purpose, to her campaign against life. It was the gateway through which she entered life.

Jane was intelligent enough to understand that she must make efficient use of that gateway, that she must render services which would be acceptable, that she must be capable. She realized that she must do her work well; but she would not do her work well for the sake of giving her employer fair return for her wages, but so that she might retain her position, even make herself remarked in it for the sake of the vague things she hoped it would lead to. Her attitude toward her position was the attitude of the shop-keeper toward his show window—as something that gave opportunity to display her wares.

A boy was seated at a flat-topped desk before the door. Behind him was a long counter topped by iron grillwork and pierced by windows such as one sees in banking institutions. To the right and left, doors led into other portions of the offices. Jane approached the boy.

"Mr. Chagnon," she said, naming Mr. Islip's private secretary.

"Name, please," said the boy, staring openly with immature admiration of which Jane was pleasantly conscious. It was auspicious that she should encounter open admiration at the very threshold of her venture.

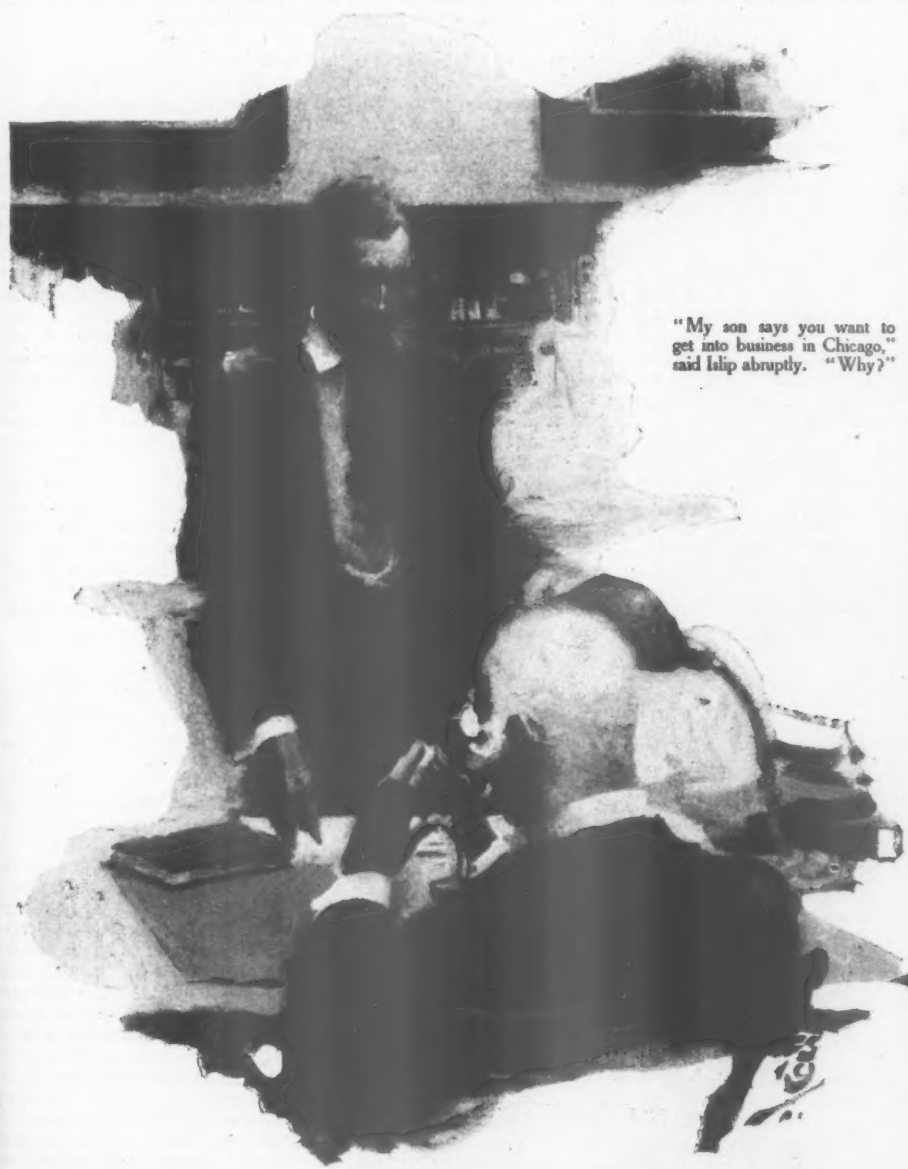
"Miss Lang," she said. "I am to be his stenographer."

"Oh, you're *her*!" exclaimed the boy in some surprise. "He said you was to come right in. I'll show you," he offered with alacrity; and jumping to his feet, he led her through the door to the left, down a passageway, and opened a mahogany door.

"Thank you," said Jane as she stepped inside.

Mr. Finney Chagnon, private secretary to Abner Islip, arose as she entered, and while he bade her good morning, she studied him covertly. He was thirty-five years old, perhaps, large, immaculate, rather pleasant of face, but with that sort of suppressed expression which private secretaries to great men often wear—an expression which seems to say that their own identities have been submerged, and their own personalities have been taken away from them by a constant repetition of phrases such as, "Mr. Islip thinks," "Mr. Islip wishes me to say," "Mr. Islip's ideas are," and so forth—a training which makes of them merely a faint reflection of the great man himself, his mouthpiece, endeavoring to pass on accurately and cautiously the words and purposes of the employer. Jane did not see this. What she saw was merely a young man, well-appearing and courteous, who was to be her immediate superior. She wondered if he were married.

"There is your desk, Miss Lang," he said. "You will find everything necessary there. I will see if Mr. Islip is in. He always likes to see new people who come into this office, especially if they are to be near him. One moment!"



"My son says you want to get into business in Chicago," said Islip abruptly. "Why?"

had never felt before. It alarmed her vaguely; her plan included no tenderesses.

She undressed and went to bed, not calm and satisfied as she had told herself she would be when she had accomplished her domestic insurgency and taken charge of her own life. She found herself restless, uneasy, apprehensive. . . . Suddenly she realized that she was afraid of the future.

## CHAPTER II

JANE LANG stepped off the elevator on the floor of the great office building occupied by Abner Islip. As she opened the door of the reception-room, she experienced a pleasant excitement; it flushed her cheeks and sparkled in her eyes. She was going to work! It was not as one approaches labor that she approached her position, but as one sets out upon an adventure. It was an adventure, fascinating, alluring, following, as she fancied, paths beset

He opened the door which led into Abner Islip's office and closed it behind him. Presently he reappeared. "If you please, Miss Lang," he said, and she followed him, a trifle apprehensive of meeting this man of many millions and vast power, this man who stood at the extreme end of the world from her father, who was everything her father was not, who, as she understood it, was opposed to everything her father favored—who was ruthless force, limitless power, boundless wealth personified.

She saw standing beside his desk a man who might have been fifty, slightly bent, slightly bald, with a smooth, rather scholarly face, who looked at her gravely as she advanced. There was nothing ruthless or wealthy or despotic in his appearance. On the contrary he gave an impression of mildness.

"Mr. Islip, this is Miss Lang," said Chagnon.

"Good morning, Miss Lang," said Abner Islip, extending his hand, in which she placed her own. He looked into her face a few seconds, which seemed embarrassingly long to her before he spoke again. "You are too pretty," he said presently—abruptly, but mildly. "I like beautiful women after six o'clock. Do you think you can forget you are pretty during business hours? But of course you can't. . . . Very well, Miss Lang. I hope you will be happy here—but I doubt it." The last words were uttered as if to himself, rather sorrowfully. He turned to his desk and seated himself, apparently forgetting her presence, and she walked out of the room, stepping very quietly, breathing hushed, impressed in spite of herself. She had spoken no word, had felt singularly youthful and insignificant. But he had said she was pretty!

These were the only preliminaries to Jane's induction into her position. Presently she found that her work really interested her. It was all novel, dealing with matters that she had had no experience of, and whose existence she had sensed only vaguely.

"I do not need to impress upon you, Miss Lang," Chagnon said before he dictated his first letter, "that your position is confidential." Then he started to dictate. He spoke clearly, swiftly, incisively, seldom pausing for a word, always submerging his own personality in Abner Islip's. He was impersonal, efficient. It seemed to Jane that he had no human side, apart from his work; and as the days passed, this impression grew. She could not conceive of Finney Chagnon in social surroundings, functioning as an individual. He was married, she learned, and it rather surprised her. She wondered vaguely if Mr. Islip dominated his domestic affairs as he did his business life. "I wonder," she mused, "what he says to his wife if she asks if he'll have another cup of coffee—probably tells her that Mr. Islip deems it unwise to have a second cup at this time."

She was astonished by the multitude of demands upon Mr. Islip's pocketbook. Individuals called by the score; letters begging for this or that cause, or from some indigent individual, poured in by hundreds. She wrote the replies; it rather shocked her preconceived ideas of the selfishness of the wealthy to note the number of checks that were inclosed; and it seemed to her that checks were sent in answer to individual appeals without a sufficient investigation into the truth of the story told or the worthiness of the applicant. She ventured to speak of it.

"Mr. Islip believes that it is better to be victimized once in a while than to delay help which may

be immediately necessary to some worthy person while he investigates," said Chagnon—and went on with his dictation as if there had been no interruption.

There were letters to men who wished to explore the Amazon and discover the South Pole; there were letters to learned societies, to sociologists, to socialists, to business men, to politicians, to women desiring the vote and to women who desired not to have it. There were replies to parents who asked Abner Islip's aid to educate their daughters in art and their sons in music. It seemed as if every thread of life spun itself somehow, some day, into that office, asking for financial aid to bring about its own end, either selfish or altruistic. Of the pure business side of Abner Islip's enormous enterprises Jane caught but passing glances.

As the week passed, Jane met other members of the office-force. The young men eagerly sought introductions and stood prepared to become admirers, but she compelled them to be admirers from afar. She was not hunting such game. There was a certain amount of wisdom, a dash of tact, and a considerable ingredient of intuition in her make-up that prevented her from deliberately offending, or from allowing herself to become disliked for a snob. Rather she cultivated a businesslike and serious demeanor with her fellow-workers, was always courteous to them, but no more. Her manner discouraged advances, and if her manner alone failed of its purpose, she utilized other means—until it became an accepted fact that it was useless to hope for intimacies of any sort, and that it was a waste of time to admire and to covet. Jane made no friends either with girls or men, and kept steadfastly to herself. The life that clerks and bookkeepers and cashiers on salaries of a couple of thousands of dollars a year could offer her was not attractive. They were not the game she hunted. She did not even play with them, though it might have been amusing to be taken to dinners and the theater as she saw other girls in the office taken. She was parsimonious of herself, almost niggardly, hoarding herself for the opportunity she looked forward to.

She had been working in the office nearly two weeks when, one morning shortly after her arrival, Abner Islip appeared in the door.

"Chagnon," he said, "I have a cable from my son saying he will land in New York Saturday. I shall go down to meet him, of course."

"Yes sir."

"Will you make the necessary arrangements?"

"Yes sir."

Jane was curiously excited by the news. She knew Abner Islip had a son, of course. When he had entered training-camp, his name had been in the papers; when he earned his commission, it had been news; and above all, it had been news when he was wounded in the Argonne. Once or twice before the war, the boy had been in the public eye for such escapades as the heir to many millions of dollars might have been expected to have a share in. Now he was coming home; doubtless she would see him, and he would see her. She considered this possibility.

"How old is Mr. Islip's son?" she asked Chagnon.

"Twenty-four—no, twenty-five now."

Jane did not have to urge herself to think about young Cleghorn Islip during the next few days. It would be untrue to say that she made plans with the captivating of Cleghorn as her object, but she did allow her imagination full license to build up an intimacy between herself and this young man (continued on page 112)



"What days do you change your mind?" demanded Cleghorn. "Nobody should wear the same mind through the week."

EVERY reader who was moved and thrilled by "The \$30,000 Penny" and "They Called Her Old Mother Hubbard" will begin at once this most unusual story by the same author.

# BEATING BACK

By

WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY

Illustrated by H. J. MOWAT

SIXTY-TWO thousand, five hundred and eighty dollars!

The money was *in cash*, and it was heaped in a rather disjointed pile on the ink-stained writing-table of a twelfth-story hotel bedroom. It was a rear room, without bath, and cost two dollars and fifty cents for each day of occupancy. Down below, stretching away to the western skyline, was the Back Bay district of Boston.

The man who had paid for the room sat before the table, staring at the money. Three things he was endeavoring to realize: that the bank-notes were in his possession; that there were *sixty-two thousand* dollars of them with a goodly surplus over; most of all, that life and the wild, sweet trail to Anywhere stretched ahead of him, with never a person or a power in all the world to read him the things he should not do—especially with the money.

It is true that in the background of his consciousness stalked an ugly specter—the guilty knowledge of the price this wealth was costing him. But he deliberately refused to face it. He would not acknowledge that the unpleasant phantom existed and was jeering at him. In that course lay weakness, exposure, punishment, misery. The big thing on which he must concentrate was the business of keeping his nerve. He felt reasonably certain that for twelve months the future was safe. Old Isaac Warren could not make his world-trip in less time and complete his long list of appointments. In any event, the loss would not be discovered until his return, and a year is a year.

The fortunate, and the unfortunate, phase of the situation lay in the fact that the man was young. Thirty years would do for him excellently. Yet there was a difference between this young man and most young men of thirty: The latter are not generally given to lined foreheads, tired eyes or faces with creases about the lips and jaw. There was an indefinable something about this gray-haired, long-legged young man which suggested that he had opened his oyster before his time. Disappointment, unhappiness, vitality-sapping discontent had been the price of his folly. And as an escape from these it was apparent he had taken a short-cut into riches without knowing just what he would do when the escape was completed.

Somehow he had not planned beyond this point. For four months—to be exact, since the February morning when old man Warren had summoned the young man into his private office and put him to work on the detail of the world-trip he purposed taking—all the young man's thoughts and energies had been concentrated on the one great idea of getting the money. Afterward? Well, when one has money what does one usually do afterward? What is money for, anyhow? To spend! Of course!

There was no denying the vivid reality of this stupendous amount of money. Bank-notes of twenties and fifties and hundreds, new green and yellowbacks which had never been folded, bills so clean and flawless that they scarcely seemed like currency—here before him they lay in all their potential might, five thousand dollars to the packet, and each packet bound tightly with an inch-wide strip of salmon-colored paper. Power! It made him supreme dictator of his life and destiny.



Just before he laid hands on the mammoth bunches of currency, he stopped. He was at the parting of the ways.

The young man drew a long breath and raised his eyes. He gazed out over the acres of roofs—skylights and water-tanks and smoking chimneys as far as the eye could carry.

"New York?" he thought aloud. "Yes, why not? Everybody knows it's easier to become irrevocably lost among the millions of Manhattan than any other place on earth. I'll go to New York City. There I'll find some unobtrusive lodgings to hide and rest and think. I'll go to New York to-night. By the morning I shall have vanished."

He suddenly threw up his arms, straightened his shoulders, stretched his muscles. He drew a deep breath and then suddenly cried out in the delirium of success.

"Freedom!" he choked. "Freedom without work—freedom with every comfort and pleasure and satisfaction which money can provide! And after all, it was so easy, so very easy!" Something sounding like a sob escaped him.

He arose, leaving the pile of crisp new currency lying on the table. He started to gather up clothing and other possessions from chairs and bed and dresser.

On the bed he laid open a heavy suit-case. It was a new and odorous suit-case with straps and buckles that worked stiffly. Beside it he lifted a black valise that was neither new nor odorous. It was scratched, and worn with travel. On arriving in this particular hotel bedroom, both ends had borne the initials in red lettering: "W. L. S." They stood for the man's name: *Wynnifred L. Sawyer*. But in the time of occupancy something ruinous had happened to those initials. An attempt had been made to obliterate them. The attempt had been almost successful—as successful as the discarded blade of a safety razor could make it. Still, traces of those initials remained. What was more, the brilliant, roughened surfaces of the leather where the initials had been was more glaringly conspicuous than the lettering untampered with. The young man had realized this when he called the task of erasure completed, but he had dismissed the danger presented by the blanket safeguard that for a year he was not to be followed anyway.



Somehow it never occurred to him to discard the valise entirely and buy a second piece of new baggage.

Into these receptacles, however, the young man started storing his personal possessions. Packing the suit-case comfortably full, he stored the surplus in the black valise. Then he crossed to the writing table to clean it of papers and money.

Just before he laid hands upon the mammoth bunches of currency, he stopped. A thought went through his mind—a strange, unwelcome, bothersome thought, one that occurred to him on many bad midnights in the years which followed: He was at the parting of the ways. Up to this moment he could, if he chose, refuse to take that left-hand road. Until he broke the first big bill to pay his fare to New York, he could still go back, repurchase the bonds and send them back to John Thirston with the information that Mr. Warren had gone without them. It was the last moment, the moment in which it was still possible for him to retract and stay within the law.

It was not a moment to be taken lightly. All the course of his life was to be altered and aborted, if he packed the money before him in the bag after stripping out the first big bill to pay his sleeper-fare of that night. Would he do it or would he not?

He fought a brief fight with himself. It lasted only the fraction of a moment. When it was over, he apologized pitifully to himself:

"I've gone too far to turn around now. Maybe I couldn't buy back the same identical bonds, anyhow."

All the same, he never forgot that brief hesitancy in that hotel bedroom before he laid hands on the unbroken sixty-two thousand five hundred and eighty dollars to pack it away in his bag. . . . The room was cleaned; everything was packed away at last. Five crisp twenty-dollar bank-notes were folded in the right-hand pocket of his vest, and the rest packed in the black valise.

Then the young man put on his hat and over one arm threw a light rain-coat. He rang for a bell-boy to carry the heavy new suit-case downstairs. He carried the black traveling bag himself. Five minutes later a taxi bore him away from the hotel entrance. It became lost in the traffic.

All this took place eleven years ago—to be exact, about half-past five of the afternoon of June fifteenth, 1908.

**T**HE GRAND HOTEL in Yokohama, Japan, is built close to the edge of Tokio Bay. Only the width of a single street separates the broad steps from the sea-wall that drops down thirty feet to the water. There are deep lounging chairs and low tabaret tables ranged along the opened windows of the veranda. In them homesick Yankees dressed in white pongee sip cooling drinks as they watch wistfully the Pacific liners draw away from their little stalls in the port-city and head eastward toward God's country.

In one of these chairs, on a lazy autumn afternoon three years after a certain young secretary to a big Vermont manufacturer had disappeared from a well-known hotel in Boston, an old-young man sat with eyes lusterless and with features drawn and haggard until it seemed that the man was on the verge of physical collapse. In common with the run of foreigners, he wore pongee and white Oxford shoes. His linen and grooming was immaculate. The cane which he twirled absently had a solid gold head, and the white fire of an expensive diamond glinted on a left-hand finger.

Four o'clock tea was ending. The little Japanese *nesans* in their ghastly-white powder and cosmetics, superpicturesque in their brilliant kimonos, were carrying away the last of the small samovars, and plates of sugared cakes. In the balcony over the main entrance a Russian orchestra was tuning up for the dinner concert. The end of the veranda which he occupied gradually emptied.

As the moments passed and he sat there with wistful eyes fixed on the mystic distance, a tear suddenly welled in the corner of one of them and started down his cheek. He did not appear to realize the presence of the tear. Certainly he made no move to wipe it away. His mouth tightened to a straight, hard line that occasionally quivered. Hands continued to twirl the walking-stick aimlessly. Then, when five minutes had ticked away, a most disconcerting thing happened.

A woman who had been watching him intently for several moments from a near-by divan rose deliberately and came toward him. She hesitated an instant, staring at his face and noting only too plainly the tear the man did not know was there. Then she sank down into the companion chair across the low tabaret.

"Don't be startled," she said softly. "Let me speak with you. I've been watching you for the past quarter-hour, and I'm sure that I remember you. You're Mr. Weston, aren't you?"

The young-old man pulled himself together.

"W-Who— Why, Miss Russell, of the boat!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I thought I knew you," she said. "I couldn't forget your face."

**S**HE was a tall, comely girl with deep, serious brown eyes and shapely, expressive hands which were clasped before her now on one knee as she settled down and bent toward him. There was something indefinably incongruous about her—an atmosphere of mystery touched with pathos. Women of her type did not go idling about the Orient alone without tragedy of some kind being responsible. And she was alone. She had come out on the same boat from San Francisco with him, and had been alone then. She had occupied a seat across from him at the table in the dining-saloon. In the monotonous, interminable days in steaming ever westward over the lonely reaches of water, she had paced the decks alone, discouraging all permanent friendships, causing much talk among the male and female old ladies of the passenger-list. When Yokohama had been reached at last, she had gone ashore alone with no one to meet her. Sawyer had gone on to Kobe and Shanghai and forgotten her.

That is to say, he had forgotten her temporarily. But there had been moments in his wandering when he thought backward over the trail which he felt so securely covered and wondered if a certain tall, comely, brown-eyed woman who had blundered into his stateroom one night by mistake had recognized what she had found him doing. It was because of that incident that he had the black bag with him no longer. For she had found him busily engaged in tardily removing every trace of those red initial letters from the ends of the bag, and when she had apologized so profusely and retreated, one of the bad cases of nerves which were attacking him more and more frequently of late had prompted him to empty the bag, carry it outside to the rail and cast it from him forever.

And now this girl was back in his scheme of things again and thrusting herself upon him.

"It's been a long time since we met last," he said, grateful for a friendly fellow-countryman to talk with.

"We came over in February. Let's see, that was eight months ago. It seems longer, doesn't it?"

"Yes," he replied honestly, "it seems—eight years."

Her clear, level eyes searched his face. They dropped down over his figure and returned. Then they switched for a moment out of the window and over the hazy reaches of the beautiful harbor. He called her back to the present by asking:

"And may I ask if you've been staying here in Yokohama ever since?"

"No," she answered. "I've been—all over Japan. My business necessitated a lot of traveling."

"Your business! Then you are not out here on a pleasure-tour? You did not tell me what your purpose was in the Orient during our trip across, you know."

"No," she said, "that's true. I saw no reason why I should. I kept silent because I felt that it might somehow interfere with my success if it was known among my fellow-passengers, especially the Japanese. I don't care now whether it's known or not for my work is almost done. I came out here to write a book on social conditions among Japanese women."

"You mean you're an authoress?"

"That's altogether too flattering and overworked a word. No, I'm just a plain newspaper writer employed by a certain syndicate of women's publications in the United States." She studied her shapely hands for a moment, and with an effort seemed to throw off the mood of introspection which sought to possess her. "And you?" she asked.

"I've been—everywhere," he said with an effort at carelessness, making a gesture with his arm toward the south. "Shanghai, Manila, Calcutta—"

"Oh—and you're back here in Japan on your way home?"

"No," he said after a moment's thought, "I'm waiting for a boat to take me to South America."

Her dark lashes were raised quickly. She darted a keen look at him. Then the glance fell again to her hands, and she turned a pearl ring around and around on the third finger of her right hand. There were no rings on the fingers of her left. Suddenly, almost impulsively, she put out one of the exquisite hands to his arm that was resting along the side of his chair.

"Mr. Weston," she said in a soft voice, "what's the matter, anyway?"

He started up, nerves in an instantaneous panic.

"What do you mean—matter? Why, nothing's the matter!"

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"No," he said, "I'm waiting for a boat to take me to South America." Her dark lashes were raised quickly. "Mr. Weston," she said in a soft voice, "what's the matter, anyway?"

"Can't you go home—even if you wanted to, Mr. Weston?"

"I—I—certainly I could go home, Miss Russell."

But the statement did not at all convince her.

"Mr. Weston, there's the mark of a tear on your cheek, and it's been there unnoticed by you for several minutes. Your eyes as you watched that big liner go down the harbor just now give the lie to your words. Don't be afraid of me, Mr. Weston. I'm—an American too; we're Yankee folks in a strange land, and so we can discount conventionality. Tell me the trouble. Maybe—maybe—I feel somewhat the same way as yourself, and you seem like an old friend, even if our acquaintance on the boat coming over was rather meager."

"There is nothing the matter," he reiterated.

Yet as he said it, the heart of the man rebelled. The girl was no adventuress nor siren. There was nothing but sympathy and sincerity in her voice and manner. He suddenly wanted, with a mighty want, to accept her invitation.

Silence came again, broken only by the slight noises of the traffic in the lobby of the hotel behind them, and the discordant thumping of a one-stringed Japanese banjo and the shrill song of a street-singing fakir-girl on the macadam thoroughfare beneath them.

"I'm sorry," she said. "This isn't the first time I've seen you. I've watched you for three days, ever since I came back from Tokio. You have always looked so sad and tired and homesick that I've wanted to speak to you. This has been my first good opportunity. I was impelled into doing it, as I say, by the fact that I also must confess to being sad and tired and homesick—everything out here is so different and shallow and depressing. But you say there is no way—in which I could be of assistance to you."

"No," he said, "there is no way that anyone can ever be of assistance to me. But I won't deny that things out here soon become depressing."

"They are doubly so to a woman," she told him. "For a woman cannot have the freedom to make acquaintances that comes to a man—not without her motives being suspected, anyway. And it seems as if the people you meet out here are divided into two classes: either those who have run away from America because of crime or tragedy, or supercilious tourists running aimlessly around for want of something better to do."

The man swallowed with difficulty. He wondered if his face was white and if the woman noticed it. Those who have run away from America because of crime—As he looked at her, sitting there so closely beside him, fellow-countrymen together regardless of their difference in sex, a surge of a totally different kind of emotion suddenly swept through the man. It came to him with dynamic vividness that he was on the verge of collapse because of exactly the lack of the thing she had voluntarily approached him and offered to supply: companionship, sympathy, consolation for his predicament. He wanted to tell somebody exactly what he was—to confess everything and clean it from his system. But he was a coward. He didn't dare. Yet as he looked hungrily at her full, characterful profile, he decided there was something he could do. He could make her his friend. There was no need for repelling her.

"Tell me about—some of your experiences here in Japan," he begged. "I wonder if you've gained an impression of the Japanese anything like my own?"

Her mood passed. She leaned back in her chair. And they talked of inconsequentials until dinner. But back of all their conscious conversation there was a Something it seemed as though each wished to tell the other, which neither dared to put into words.

When it came time to dress for dinner, he waited for her in the lobby. They went into the long high dining-room together. Many times in the past three years a girl had sat opposite him at a table made for two and bartered her companionship and society for the money he paid for her check. Not one of them had been such a girl as sat opposite to him now.

JAPANESE moon in a dusky sky, branches of the cryptomaria trees motionless in the hush of dreamy night, a great stillness over a mammoth city which knows no roar of

traffic even by day! In this atmosphere of mystic romance the old-young man in pongee and the comely girl with the speaking dark eyes sauntered hours later through a little Japanese park. They came finally to a fancy wooden settle.

Neither spoke for several moments after they sank upon it, deep in the shadow. The girl poked the point of her parasol into the gravel, and the man toyed absently again with the cane. An intimacy was growing between them, an intimacy old as the world—something they could not have avoided in that environment even if they would.

"Mr. Weston," she said finally, "I asked you this afternoon to tell me the trouble that is—torturing you and dragging you down. You said there was no such trouble. But that was subterfuge. Do you want to tell me—now?"

"Why do you persist in asking me to do this?" he demanded. "Because it is torturing you," she said, "because it is dragging you down, because it will either kill you or drive you insane. You cannot rid yourself of it excepting by sharing it. And I—that's the reason I offered to share it with you."

"B-But—but—"

"I'm not blind, Mr. Weston. And there's—there's another reason why I offered to do it. Maybe sometime you'll know."

Perhaps if the Japanese moon had not been riding in a half-real sky and the cicadas not been singing in the boxwood and pepper trees, he would never have told her. But he was indeed the thing for which the keen-witted but honest girl had taken him—a heartsick, homesick boy. And his carefully guarded habit of reticence slipped from him in spite of himself. Caution went suddenly to the four winds. He uttered a sob and gave vent to his bitterness.

"I'll tell you what I am, Miss Harriet: I'm the most miserable man on earth; I'm a man *without a country*!"

"Without a country," she repeated softly. "What do you mean?"

"I'm a man accursed," he went on. "I'm a man without relatives or friends. I'm a wanderer on the face of the earth who can thank no one but himself for the conditions which made him a wanderer. I'm the burned-out husk of a male-human who is beginning to believe at last that he would be better off dead."

She turned in the shadow, and her expressive eyes sought his face.

"Why?" she asked.

"Don't be afraid to tell me. And when you're finished—I'll tell you something in turn."

"Because," he answered, "I've had every wish gratified that I ever had. I've followed every whim that I've felt in the past three years. I've tasted every pleasure that there is to taste, and followed up everything which held out diverting novelty for the moment. And having gratified myself, fed myself to dissipation, done everything I've ever dreamed of doing, I've simply come to the place at last where there's nothing left to do, and I'm frantic and miserable. I wish I could go back; I'd like to become a little boy again, knowing nothing of what there is in the world but its dreams."

His hot words occasioned her no surprise.

"But you don't look like a man who has lived like that," she remonstrated.

"If I were going to place you according to type, I'd make you a bookkeeper or a clerk or some such class of business person who had been taken abruptly from a familiar environment in which he had been reasonably contented and plunged into another in which he was at a loss how to conduct himself. I'd take you for a man who's lived cleanly and honestly up to a certain age, though poorly paid, perhaps, and given tasks beyond his strength to do—then suddenly had the misfortune to lose his moorings. Oh, I don't mean that you did anything dishonest," she added quickly, "but something happened which raised you out of your class and took away your incentive in life by permitting you to reach too quickly such goals as you may have had. Now, am I right or wrong? Is that the difficulty, or isn't it?"

"Miss Harriet," he cried thickly, "I'll tell you what I was, for the secret is killing me. I was the secretary to a certain big business man—a manufacturer. I'd lost my parents when a boy, and

## "DEVIL'S GOLD"

THAT is the title of a remarkable story of the South Seas that has been written for the next number of the THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE by

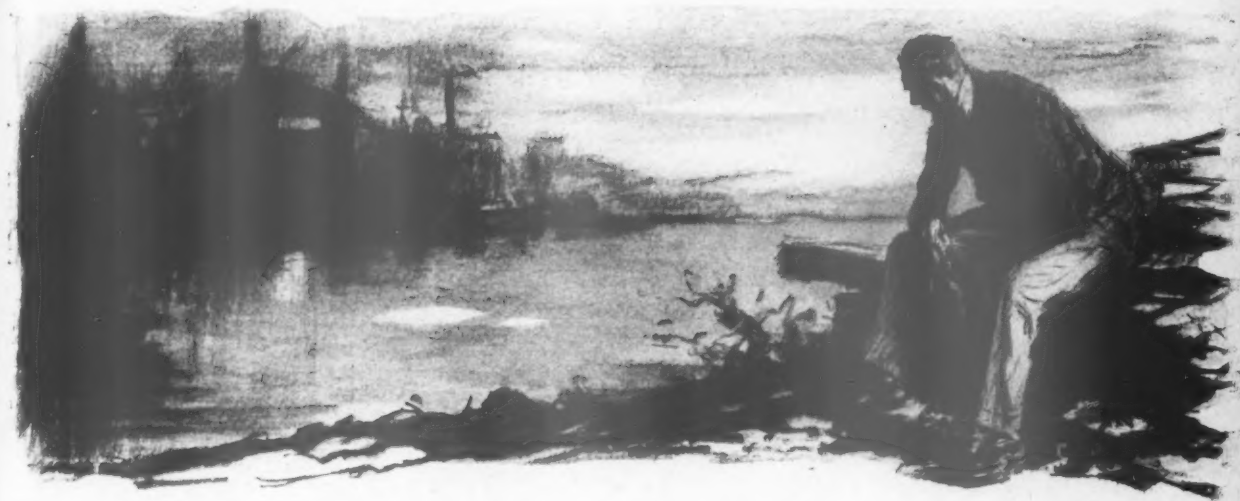
BEATRICE GRIMSHAW

It is the story of a young man's carefully laid plans to secure all the gold in a mining camp and what came of it—the sort of story that you'll never forget.

person who had been taken abruptly from a familiar environment in which he had been reasonably contented and plunged into another in which he was at a loss how to conduct himself. I'd take you for a man who's lived cleanly and honestly up to a certain age, though poorly paid, perhaps, and given tasks beyond his strength to do—then suddenly had the misfortune to lose his moorings. Oh, I don't mean that you did anything dishonest," she added quickly, "but something happened which raised you out of your class and took away your incentive in life by permitting you to reach too quickly such goals as you may have had. Now, am I right or wrong? Is that the difficulty, or isn't it?"

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had to support myself and two unappreciative sisters long before a boy should be called upon to bear such a burden. For thirteen years I'd struggled to get somewhere and only bungled things at every turn. I had few acquaintances and no friends. I was weary of poverty and self-denial, frantic for a little rest, something different than I'd ever known—comforts and luxuries and opportunities that only money brings. Then, very suddenly one day—I came into money."

There was a sharp intake of breath on the part of the intently listening woman, but the man did not notice.

"It was a modest amount of money, as fortunes go in America," he went on, "but to me it was a competency. It was large enough at least to lift me out of the poverty and necessity for everyday work any longer, and permit me overnight to realize everything I'd ever dreamed. It permitted me good clothes and a luxurious apartment—a standard of living that before the mistake I conceived to be little short of heaven. But it soon ceased to be heaven. It became as ordinary and depressing as life had been in my furnished room. My acme of happiness before my—legacy—had been to own a motorcar. The money permitted me to buy one. I drove an automobile until the thought of presiding at a steering-wheel and burning up country disgusted me. Then I decided to go traveling. And I went traveling. At some time or other during these past three years I've visited every country of importance on the globe. I've had a regular orgy of travel. Now you find me here on a bench in this Japanese park."

"Miss Russell," he went on, "I was poor and cynical and discouraged as an ordinary stenographer at eighteen dollars a week. I came into money. Overnight the means became mine to gratify every whim and realize every dream. *And it's my undoing!* I've reached by a short-cut the goal for which millions strive. And it's damned me! By the very success of the circumstance it has damned me. I have put a millstone about my own neck. I wish that death would come and lift it away!"

"How did you come by this money?" asked the girl.

Again the panic. Why was she so deadly inquisitive on that point?

"What difference does it make?"

Several minutes passed; then she suddenly appeared to reach a decision.

"Mr. Weston," she said softly, "having told me this much, don't let's clutter an acquaintance which offers inviting possibilities with miserable subterfuges. Tell me honestly, just how *did* you come by this money?"

"Why do you persist in asking that?" he cried.

"I've wondered too often about your industry the night I walked into your cabin by mistake. My dear friend, I saw what you were doing. You were just ahead of me in line at the dock in San Francisco while waiting to have our baggage checked up," she continued. "We had to wait in that line so long that I couldn't help studying your handbag with the scraped ends. Then at sea I accidentally came upon you working over it, and when we disembarked here in Yokohama, you did not have it. It just occurred to me that—that—"

"That I was a thief, running away—what?" he demanded harshly.

"Yes, if you want to call it that," she said simply.

"All right," he answered in a voice he scarcely recognized as his own, "since you've guessed so far right, I'll make a clean breast of it. I *am* a thief! Three years ago, Miss Harriet, I stole about sixty thousand dollars from my employer and made away with it successfully!"

SHE did a queer thing at such an announcement. She laid the parasol beside her and put one fist against the side of her face. Her right arm she lifted and laid upon his shoulder.

"Yes," she said, a bit hoarse herself, "tell me *everything*, dear friend. How did you manage it?"

"But I'd be putting myself unreservedly in your hands!"

"Yes," she said, "that's true. Yet you've got to confess everything in order to—to feel better."

"How do I know you're not a detective—sent after me to make me tell this?" he demanded wildly.

But the woman did not seem to take offense. She only laughed sadly.

"A detective! *Me!* Oh, my dear boy, I assure you I am far from being a detective. Go ahead and tell me all about how you did it. When you get through, then I'll tell *you* something. You've got my word that I am not. I promise that whatever you tell me will go no further."

He believed her. And he blurted out at last the whole crooked story.

"It was when Mr. Warren called me into his office and told me he was going abroad, to be gone a year, that I first got the idea," he said. "I got the idea because that morning he instructed me to take a bundle of New Haven railroad bonds which he'd bought from a friend and carry them down to his safe-deposit box in the First National Bank. I'd done such things for him dozens of times; he never gave a thought about my honesty."

"And you didn't deposit them?"

"Oh, yes, I deposited them. I didn't dare tamper with them until he was out of the country; he might call for them at the last moment. I was to accompany him to Boston and work with him as confidential stenographer up to the last moment of sailing. In that way I had access to his stationery and the portable typewriter we always carried with us."

"Where did your employer live? Where did this happen?"

"A little city up in Vermont, Miss Harriet." He gave its name.

"Well, how did you eventually get the bonds?"

The next time I was given the use of his safe-deposit key, I had a duplicate made. I tried it in the lock several times to be sure it worked, and then I swapped keys with him so I could have the original and never arouse the suspicion of the bank people. Then we left Vermont and went to Boston."

"But how—"

"I knew exactly how long it took a letter to go to Vermont and an answer to come back; and the day before Mr. Warren sailed, I wrote to one John Thirston, cashier of the bank. I worded it as written by Mr. Warren and directed Thirston to open the box with the key I was inclosing and take out all my railroad bonds inside. I gave as a reason that I'd (Continued on page 124)



THE things Jolanda does and the things she says are going to delight the readers of this series of stories by an author who knows and understands the femininity of our day just a little better than most, as was revealed in her novel, "A Woman's Woman."

## JOLANDA—V. V. V.

By

NALBRO BARTLEY

Illustrated by

MARIAN KEEN WAGNER

your face?" And to continue the day's routine of any happily situated sixteen-year-old American girl with sensible parents and an irrepressible brother and not betray her "inner self!"

Except on Friday or Saturday nights, when Jolanda and Peter Jr. were given the liberty of the earth until ten o'clock, Jolanda welcomed bedtime, that she might resume the vision of changing her lovely young self into the vampire woman, always Mrs. Violet Dedloff by name. On such a night as this, her mother, who was folding away her needlework in the living-room, said to her husband:

"Peter, have you noticed how thin Jolanda is growing?"

"Can't say I have. Is she in love?"

"I hardly think so. Boys receive little mercy at her hands. Tom Frost and Merlin York each asked Peter to intercede with Jolanda as to why she wouldn't go to the fraternity dance with them."

"Well?" Sometimes Jolanda was more of a responsibility than her father was keen on accepting.

"Peter wasn't an overly tender messenger. After interviewing Jolanda on the danger of her becoming a 'crab,' he reported briefly that she hadn't 'a chemical trace of intelligence'—I think that was it. So Tom took Daphne to the dance, and Gladys went with Merlin. Jolanda stayed home, writing in her room."

"Is anything really worrying her?"

"Nothing more serious than thunder, spiders and having to eat an occasional boiled dinner. Wier's foolishness about the ring is responsible for much of Jolanda's imagination and whims."

Wier Kenyon was the younger bachelor friend of the Spencers who darted off to the Orient to make his fortune and had been named honorary godfather upon Jolanda's arrival. He did credit to the title by recklessly writing a proposal of marriage for the young lady's hand, to take effect twenty years hence, sending her a tiny but perfect diamond solitaire ring instead of the proverbial silver mug and rattle. The ring caused much amusement at Jolanda's christening, but later on it caused Jolanda to feel a trifle set apart and superior to other girls whose godfathers sent silver mugs and rattles. Whenever she became a pressing problem, there was but one verdict: "Wier's nonsensical engagement-ring and our foolishness in ever telling her, and his absurd letters signing himself her 'dashing octogenarian.'" Whereat they would write Wier on the subject, urging him to take unto himself a wife and lose the little fantasy he fostered regarding his Yankee god-child.

"Jolanda is like countless girls," her father mused. "They're a new type that has developed, the last decade—haven't you noticed it? Come and sit on my chair-arm; we can't prevent the younger generation from knocking at the door—but we can at least grumble about it."

He flung down his paper and with an attractive smile, quite like Jolanda's own, waited until his wife perched on the old chair-arm and rumbled up his hair as romantically as even Jolanda's dream-people rumbled each other's hair before her vampire self shattered forever their rosy romance.

AFTER several rather coquettish attempts Jolanda agreed with *Huckleberry Finn*: that it is useless to pray a lie. But there were advantages in dreaming one. After enduring "green plush and golden oak" good-night kisses of her family, as Jolanda described them to her chums Gladys Patterson and Daphne McGrath, she sought consolation in lying awake and visualizing herself as a recreated vampire in the same fashion that all normal boys yearn to be bank-robbers or king of the Bad Lands.

Jolanda longed to attract sinister mysteries and unsolved tragedies into her path, to be publicly branded—a tall, regal woman with tired, lilac shadows under dark, burning eyes, and a wealth of blue-black hair fastened with rare gold ornaments, to have perfectly modeled features, an ivory-white skin, faint dimples when she smiled,—which should only be during a supreme crisis and the smile one of cynical disdain,—long, tapering fingers with the wealth of a king's ransom on them and the carriage of one who "glided, never seeming to touch the earth."

Her clothes should be dainty conspiracies between pink satin and black chantilly lace, trailing, orchid velvet gowns with ropes of pearls, subtle one-tone creations compelling admiration even from enemies. Arriving at the clothes-tree stage of her recreated vampire self, Jolanda usually fell asleep still planning a shimmering, rainbow negligee, in which she should be discovered—"the smoking pistol close by."

Wakening in response to her mother's cheery, "Here's another lovely day!" Jolanda was forced to suppress her dream-self, donning commonplace blue serge and arriving downstairs in time to set the breakfast-table and endure Peter's whistling or such a salutation as: "Why don't you get a permanent wave put on

"We've been happy even if we haven't become rich, haven't we?" he said soberly.

"We've the children, and Wier hasn't anyone. Besides, it never pays to be too comfortable regarding just *things*. There's Violet Dedloff—I remember when she went barefoot, summers, because of necessity; yet she must have been happier then than she is now."

Peter Spencer put his arm around his wife's waist. "It's good to just be plain American and live in a plain, American way, not smothered with the fleshpots nor whimpering from lack of necessities. I've been able to take care of my boy and girls and their mother, but not much else; yet I'm not sorry—are you?"

Jane Spencer shook her head. "No. For you've never cheated anyone nor lost your own self-respect. You're everything I would want you to be—and if our house is shabby, it's because it's been a real home, and we've lived in and loved every corner of it. Perhaps you could have gone to bigger cities and become a richer man, but you wouldn't have been a happier one."

"After which sermon, let us talk about why Jolanda is 'growing thin and refuses to go to dances as any womanette should.'"

"Why womanette?"

"I call Jolanda and her kind womanettes, because they are such self-sufficient and amusingly lovely persons, differing from regulation flappers or the *jeune fille*, and worthy of a better title than 'young thing.' They advise all members of their family with naïve shrewdness and intuitive soundness of judgment; they are brilliant of mind and sweet and sound at rock bottom, a problem and a mental tonic combined. Our Louise was never like that."

"Because Louise fell in love with Robert Todd at seventeen and married him at twenty, and here begins and ends her blessed little story. But Jolanda at twenty!" Her mother held up her hands in helpless surrender.

A half-hour later, Peter Spencer recalled something to tell his wife. In the midst of locking up the house, he rushed upstairs to say: "I don't know why I forgot to tell you—Violet Dedloff has returned, and is at the Oaks. Now, what does she find in our little town as an attraction?"

"Really? Whatever will she do next?"

"She brought along a Jap or so, and a ladies' maid, three motors and a dog, and opened the house with a characteristic swirl. Hamilton isn't the sort of city that feels comfortable with a home-grown vampire on its hands. Perhaps she'll dedicate her services to finding jobs for homeless bartenders; it would be like her," he ended with a laugh.

"She's probably cooling another fierce love-affair; shall I call?"

"I'd rather you didn't. You can't ask her here, because of Jolanda. Besides, we've nothing in common with Vi's scheme of things."

"Perhaps—only I remember her as a little girl, just Jim Whiston's daughter. It might mean a great deal to her to be so remembered."

"But you're not Vi's sort, and Jolanda is keen as a briar for excitement. It would never do."

"All right, husband o' mine," Jolanda's mother said in the cheery, even voice that had caused Jolanda, tossing restlessly in the next room, to think her mother naught but a domestic jelly-fish. "Please set out the milk-bottles. There's a slip in one asking for extra cream."

Ten minutes later Jolanda climbed out of bed and lifted the

shade, letting the moonlight stream into her room. She slipped on her dressing-gown, a homemade, dull blue cashmere, and sat beside the window, lost in a new reverie.

Violet Dedloff was in town, at the Oaks, the long-closed Dedloff estate, Hamilton's only show-place! Her father had told her mother not to call on this wonderful creature, and worst of all, her mother was going to obey! Jolanda's hands clenched together to curb her emotion. Were her parents always to go through life as if merely playing hookey from a cemetery? Must she, Jolanda Spencer, craving for a vampire soul, endure a life of mediocrity? Was she never to escape the safe little city, encountering danger, tragedy, suffering? Was she to endure high-school, stay-at-home-with-your-mother, simpering schoolgirls such as Daphne McGrath and Gladys Patterson, whose ambitions were directed to misunderstood heroines beginning the reel in calico and a bruised heart and ending in white furs and the lap of luxury!

"I hate *Snow Whites*," Jolanda said aloud, but only the howls of Mike the Bite and Tommy the Tooth answered her.

"I want to be a vicious vampire—a very vicious vampire," she said, also aloud. "Oh, Mrs. Dedloff—*dear* Mrs. Dedloff!" She dropped the glass to stare out past the rows of houses,—all hateful to Jolanda, since they were the abode of other simple-minded citizens such as her own family not possessing a family skeleton of any consequence,—over to a steep green hedge where began the Dedloff estate and where now slept the idol of Jolanda's heart—Violet Dedloff, a V. V. V. according to report.

"Good night, dear love—until we meet," she said shyly, kissing her hand in the general direction of the Oaks.

Life was no longer cast in such drab colors for Jolanda; her dreams and reality were on the point of merging. For if one could not, all in an instant, cease to be Jolanda Spencer, humiliated by hand-me-down fur-



An instant later Mrs. Dedloff stood looking down at the queer, still thing lying before them. She was saying monotonously: "He's ended it—he's ended it!"



niture and dyed coats, a freckled nose and a father and mother who went to church and fussed if she did not stay to Sunday school—one could go to the idol of her heart, Mrs. Violet Dedloff, and throw herself at her mercy.

The whole situation far surpassed Jolanda's wildest hopes. Her parents had known the tempestuous pathway along which Vi Whiston's slim little feet had seen fit to tread. From her elopement at seventeen with Teddy Dedloff, Colonel Dedloff's scapegrace grandson and heir to a "cold four million," according to authorities, to her European sensations, such as jewel-robberies, flirtations with princes of remote and now shattered kingdoms and her placing of Teddy Dedloff in an insane sanitarium a little later on. "Being free to galivant," as Hamilton had said, Violet Dedloff then traveled the globe, spending her money as she pleased, now on the stage,—for the lark of it, hobnobbing with aristocracy,—now sending back a news story that she was to join an Arab tribe, now that she was to enter a cloister! And after many headlines and many years, she returned to Hamilton and prepared for a crossing of swords when she attempted to enter the social arena of her own home town!

Even Jolanda's remote but cherished octogenarian, Wier Kenyon, who was so busy selling tea and spices in the Orient that he never had time to come back and see his goddaughter, he written to the Spencers:

"Vi Dedloff turned up in Shanghai last week and created her usual furore by wearing diamond-studded-heeled shoes and a four-inch amulet set with blue-white diamonds. Besides these aforementioned articles and four inches of buffalo robe, there was nothing more to describe about Vi's costume. We had tiffin, during which she told of her desire some day to take Hamilton by storm and cause it to love and forgive her! No use talking, ol' friends, when Vi wants to be charming, she can melt pig-iron. But how does she do it? Is it all the magic of a French maid? Please keep my goddaughter away from her if she ever does descend, French maid and all, on your doorstep."

Jolanda compared briefly Mrs. Dedloff's French maid and the Spencers' hired girl, Effie Drummer, the only handmaiden the Spencers had known in years—Effie with her big yellow eyes and the slanting, freckled forehead, eternally embroidering pillow-shams and threatening the children in bygone days with "the kangaroos are coming."

FOR some years Violet Dedloff had been a dominant personality in Jolanda's mind, some one secretly to admire—but for the last two years she had become her idol. When Daphne McGrath and Gladys Patterson, at the Triangle Club, a mysterious affair concocted to spite a debating society at which the three womanettes had cruelly been omitted from membership-lists, told of their ambitions to become *Snow White* movie stars, having in reality all the joys and caresses the *Snow Whites* enjoy on the screen, Jolanda held out against their kiss-mammy scheme of life, and to their horror insisted:

"I want to be a V. V. V., who stays up to see the sunrise instead of gets up to see it, the sort who fairly startle facts out of one, facts one has hid from even their own family, one who creates trouble, wreaks vengeance ruthlessly, is pursued, abused yet triumphs and ends hungry of heart and broken of spirit—with the beauty of gray hair and an aristocratic pallor, the last word in swathed black-velvet effects. I want a winter home in Moscow, where I will be seen only at rare intervals in my sable-rugged sledge, and a summer home in the Far East built, like the castles in Peter's old fairy book, with a bomb-proof pergola and day and night shifts of guards."

At which declaration, although secretly admiring Jolanda's courage, Daphne and Gladys pretended disapproval and intimated that unless Jolanda be won to the cause of the *Snow White*, the club would be discontinued for propriety's sake.

"Force knows no compromise," Jolanda had retorted, having read the caption on the screen of a vampire film that same week; so she carried the day with the embryo *Snow Whites* by crowning herself a V. V. V., and at all their play-acting-and-pretending meetings conducted herself accordingly.

The Triangle Club met the next evening at Jolanda's house, it being Friday night and her parents attending the "moth-eaten reading-circle of Hamilton's select," as Jolanda's inner self expressed it.

Peter preferred to stay at home, to be annoying, and clutter up the kitchen with his eternal ante-bedtime custom of "stinging ham and eggs," which took place when his parents were absent.

"I'm not going to listen to ravings," he told Jolanda, who objected to his presence in the house. "A lot I care for girls that

haven't any more influenza than if they were born in cold storage!" Upon which Jolanda forgot her V. V. V. dignity and descended to a heated argument, resulting in Peter's banishment to the kitchen and a bolting of the parlor door.

OVER a plate of candy, the Triangle Club discussed the coming marriage of their favorite teacher, the next fraternity dance, the new Japanese toddle, Venice Fisher's going to New York to study design, the last movie film, the reason Hamilton boys were nicer than boys from other towns; and then Daphne McGrath broached the subject of Mrs. Dedloff's being in town.

"I'll bet you'll stop playing you're a V. V. V., Jolanda, now we have a real vampire on our hands. Father and Mother say they won't speak to her if they meet her on the street."

"They needn't worry," Jolanda answered patronizingly. "She'll never be on foot—and she's so beautiful they probably won't recognize her."

"Mother says she'll give money to charities and buy her way in—like Mr. Pighetti did after he set his clothing-store on fire," suggested Gladys.

"Mrs. Dedloff has her own circle of European friends—but you, none of you understand," Jolanda protested, "you little *Snow Whites*!"

"It's all very well for you to play vampire, but it's not right to keep it up—now we're all past sixteen. We're not children," Daphne took up the argument. "And if we should ever tell on you, it wouldn't be any surprise if your family was ostracized. Otis Ivan Sparks wouldn't speak to you again."

Jolanda tossed her head. "Ostracize me—you and Otis Ivan Sparks! I don't believe half the time I'm acting for you that you understand me—"

"It is silly to act—like children playing nursery games," Daphne retorted. Daphne had been given a cedar chest for her birthday, and the gift inspired womanly hoardings of linen and silver, a clue to Daphne's future intentions.

"Our acting is silly," Gladys generously supplemented, "but Jolanda has such shivery things to say—she really does act. Tell us some things to-night."

"If it's too painful to Miss McGrath," began Jolanda, "although it is in my own home—"

Daphne, who was a good-natured bunch of yellow curls and brown eyes, gave way to giggles. "Don't get a mad on, Jolanda; you know you'd hate to have anyone know—you made this a secret club yourself. If you'll begin the acting to-night—I'll play I'm Mary Pickford—just for one more time."

"Listen," Jolanda commanded, striking a pose, "I pay fifty dollars a pair for fleshings; I insist on my manager providing me with the best that artists can design and artisans can execute. I revel in marble—costly gems, rich fabrics and paradise sprays are my hobbies. Pigeon-blood rubies and black pearls are my favorite gems. My perfumes are made in Madrid from crushed orange-blossoms and orchids with a hint of Moorish love-powders. None can resist me—none, I say! Aha! I am wealth personified; I cannot endure a single, sordid note in my surroundings—scores of my costumes cost a thousand ducats apiece. I am shameless in my extravagance, abandoned in luxuries. I crave novelties—novelties—"

"Try eating a pair of goldfish," suggested a cracking soprano.

With a scream the Triangle Club rose to view Peter dropping Mike the Bite down the parlor transom and Jolanda stepped from her rôle of V. V. V. to that of a peppery ground-worker as Peter recorded.

However, Daphne was right. Their play-acting was silly and to no purpose; when one has passed her sixteenth birthday, reality is the thing!

HAVING sent in her mother's card to Mrs. Dedloff and been admitted without delay, Jolanda was suddenly stricken dumb. She was like the East Indian rug-vendor who throws his rug across his chest and is silent, letting the beauty of his wares do the selling.

"So you're Jane and Peter Spencer's daughter," Mrs. Dedloff was saying, "and they sent you as a welcome home—mighty nice, after all these years!" There was a quiver in her gay voice.

"You've your father's smile and your mother's eyes; the rest is quite your own idea. Sit here and tell me all about it!"—pointing to a little chair near her own.

Foreseeing complications as embarrassing as an altercation with a street-car conductor, Jolanda sank into the chair—conscious that she was all arms and legs, that her white serge, which she had fancied quite *à la* Theda Bara, had a countrified air, and that the



"A few have halfway batted an eye," Mrs. Dedloff told Jolanda, "but the majority have given me to understand that their ostracism reeks of the continuous. But what care I as long as I have Jolanda?"

little basket of flowers worn for a hat must seem a mere kitchen bouquet.

"Oh, Mrs. Dedloff!" she began in an awed voice, looking at Mrs. Dedloff to find the inspiration to confess, as any vampire ought to do.

"Oh, Jolanda—as bad as all that?" the gay voice said. "Look up and let me see you. What ails the infant?"

Jolanda reached out her hand to pat Mrs. Dedloff's terrier, Kum-bac by name, staring at the V. V. V. in whose presence she had clandestinely and willfully maneuvered to be. After all this, the V. V. V. proved to be anything but haughty and sinister as she snuggled in her basket chair, her wadded tea-gown of old blue velvet and absurdly frivolous brocaded shoes giving every indication of a loathed *Snow White*.

Face to face with "reality," Jolanda discovered Mrs. Violet Dedloff to be the thin, fallow, freckled type of woman whom all other women instinctively fear and despise and whom men, excepting artists who try painting their portraits, blindly and unreasonably adore. No one has ever explained the fascination of this type or ever will. They are fat women's special abomination, these meager, homely little sirens who swing in hammocks by the hour, munching chocolate, while the fat women, sweated to the chin, sprint a mile before a breakfast of spinach and dry toast and spend the best share of the day floor-rolling. Whereat the meager little creatures remain one feather lighter than a ton of ether, saying to the fat women: "Poor old dears—all worn out! Try some maple puffs—delicious, I assure you!"

IT was a momentary shock to Jolanda as she realized that this vampire who had juggled the Dedloff millions as she wished and played at being nearly everything, was simply a tired-faced woman with queer green eyes and a smile that made every-one her slave.

Jolanda, who "carried her youth in her face like flying flags," threw back her head defiantly. After all, when one good vampire meets another—why mince words or situations? In a few well-chosen and forceful sentences, according to Jolanda, she explained the situation, that under pain of severe disapproval, even being sent to a convent,—this was quite her own idea,—she dared to beard the V. V. V. in her den, that it did not matter in the least how severe might be her parents' displeasure—no one had ever understood her, and for two years she knew hers was a liberated soul longing to be like one Violet Dedloff. Now that she was able really to be with her, even though her father forbade her mother's calling on "Jim Whiston's daughter," she, Jolanda, was through with such a city as Hamilton, the spirit of whose citizens would be to try marching spiritedly to the tune of "Asleep in the Deep," through with her narrow, maddening routine. Wouldn't Mrs. Dedloff let her be her companion, her maid—anything in order to go with her?

After this outburst she became slightly confused under the scrutiny of Mrs. Dedloff's odd eyes.

"So Peter told Jane not to call," Mrs. Dedloff said softly, "but she did remember me as just Jim Whiston's daughter?"

Jolanda nodded impatiently; why haggle over such nonsense when all of life—the eternal frolic—was before them?

"It doesn't matter what they said," she hastened to explain; "it's you that matters more than anything else. I want to be like you; I wish my life would be just as exciting and wonderful. You see, I've never gone in for any kind of art, and I loathe just getting married. My sister married a nice young man," she admitted grudgingly; "his name is Robert Todd. He keeps the dry-goods store at Cozy Corner, Illinois. But it's rather a bore to have to visit them and take the children out walking and listen to Robert tell how high wool is. You understand, Mrs. Dedloff. I can't go on being just Jolanda Spencer of Hamilton—"

"You cunning, silly baby!" Mrs. Dedloff held out her arms. "Come here this minute. It's the first time in my wicked life"—this with a little laugh—"I've ever held a real little girl close and scolded her as if she were my own. I'm glad you're Jane and Peter's little girl, even if Peter has written my name in his Domesday Book. Sh-h! Listen, Jolanda; I'm going to send you home, but we'll have tea first—real, vampire tea with green almonds and strawberries and a gilt-tipped, scented cigarette, and we'll talk about stilettos and waxed-mustachioed counts if you like—but then you must go home."

"I can't go home and tell them; they'd disinherit me or lock me up."

Mrs. Dedloff's lined, lovely little face drew itself into a perplexing *moue*. "You mean you actually thought of descending on me, bag and baggage! Oh, you are a treat!"

"But I know I'd be just as wonderful a vampire, Mrs. Dedloff—if I only had the chance. I'm different from other girls—"

MRS. DEDLOFF rose and paced up and down the old-fashioned library, a charming figurine in her blue tea-gown, prowling among the carved walnut chairs and secretaries, Kum-Bac at her heels. She paused under the painting of Colonel Dedloff, and looking at Jolanda with a shade of the old gentleman's sternness said:

"I'll tell you a secret—I'm not a vampire. Sorry to show my clay toes so soon, but you may as well be disillusioned. I'm just Jim Whiston's daughter, but it's too late to make anyone believe it, isn't it?"

"Vampires always deny their title—besides, Mrs. Roger McGrath said—"

"Cora McGrath may seem to be superior of judgment, but she would descend to green plumes unless sharply watched; so don't quote her," Mrs. Dedloff flippantly returned.

"But everyone says you've been so terrible," Jolanda persisted. "Do they?" she said sharply. "Not one of them ever thought—"

she began, continuing her restless promenade. "See here, little novice, I'll send you home, but we'll make a bargain—and keep it a secret. Afternoons, when you feel you must have some one very wicked to talk to, slip in through the hedge, and you'll find the French windows at the right always open. I'll dress you up in my most vampirish gowns; I've one that's a puff of blue chiffon with a dash of soft gray fur that would suit you well. And we'll play vampire to your heart's content. I'll really be a very safe safety-valve—if they only knew. But this is on the one condition that the rest of the time you are plain Jolanda Spencer, the best sort of a regular daughter two old schoolmates of mine ever possessed. Is it a go?"

"You think I'm afraid to defy the world and stay with you—"

"Would you—really?" Mrs. Dedloff looked out the window as she added: "People usually pay the highest prices for the privilege of making the greatest fools of themselves."

"But surely you've been more than just foolish?" Jolanda was loath to admit the presence of virtuous clay toes.

"Only foolish—but so much so that unless I made myself take the big things with indifference, and tiny things such as clouds, flowers, a young girl's romantic notions, seriously—I should be quite mad. It's a terrible misfortune, Jolanda, to be born a *chez-fence* person."

"*Chez-fence*?" Jolanda's blue eyes were darkening with disappointment.

"A *chez-fence* person is one who is at home wherever there is a latchkey—one who likes both missionaries and ballet-dancers, poker and Sanskrit, a smug little town like Hamilton, and Paris by night. *Chez-fence* is my permanent address; it ought to be on my calling-cards!" She beat her hands together as if she rebelled against the fact.

"But people say you've been awful; and the newspaper—"

"People don't realize that most of us have very active and self-starting consciences, but no principle; and once in a while a person, and usually a *chez-fence* person, has rather decent principle when you touch rock-bottom, but not a particle of conscience. That was the way Jim Whiston's daughter was endowed."

SHE rang the bell and ordered tea, telling Jolanda trifles about Paris and Algiers, asking as to old Hamilton landmarks, singing under her breath while the Jap fixed the "vampire tea" and retired.

Jolanda made one more attempt. "But you have done nearly everything anyone could do, haven't you, Mrs. Dedloff?"

"Have I? Perhaps that's why I'm sad when it's twilight and feel as useless as a pewter dollar. There is a distinct melancholy in having finished everything—we all need an Aladdin's window."

"Oh, no," Jolanda protested. "You're so lovely—and so real. You don't disappoint me, although I thought you'd be haughty and roll your r's. But you're nicer this way. You just couldn't disappoint me."

Mrs. Dedloff set down her cup with a little clatter. "We'll keep our secret, wont we, little vampire? There's nothing wrong in it, and it'd mean a bally lot to me. Peter and Jane have you all the time; they'd loan you if their stupid selves would understand. I'm think-talking—so drink up your tea and don't bother to listen."

"Why don't you make people sorry for treating you as they do?"

"Because revenge is so often stupid. Even if I did so, they would still be curious onlookers. If I had some one of my very own, I'd-bleed white before I gave up the game—but single harness is careless harness; so I jog along in (Continued on page 88)





# THE KILLER

## By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

Illustrated by E. F. WARD

### CHAPTER V

**I**T all happened when I was a kid, and didn't know any better than to do such things—in Arizona in 1897. They dared me to go up to Hooper's ranch and stay all night; and I took that dare. Now, Hooper had a queer and sinister reputation for cruelty and worse. "He's a bad *hombre*," Windy Bill warned me. "Never does any killing himself; but all he has to do is to lift one eye at a man he don't like, and that man is as good as dead. His Mexican killers do the job."

Well, I went up to Hooper's ranch and pretended I was just traveling through, and the old bird took me in hospitably enough. But it sure was a spooky place: adobe house inside a wall, a few Mexicans sulking about, and everything dead quiet—no birds singing around, no flies, even. And Hooper was a snaky old customer, pleasant enough on the outside, but with a cold, ugly eye. At dinner he introduced a pale, slender girl as his daughter. During the meal he jumped up and ran outside to kill a frog that annoyed him by its chirping—and the girl slipped this note to me:

*I am here against my will. I am not this man's daughter. For God's sake, if you can help me, do so. But be careful, for he is a dangerous man. My room is the last one on the left wing of the court. I am constantly guarded. I do not know what you can do. The case is hopeless. I cannot write more. I am watched.*

But before I said good night Hooper calmly handed me another similar note which he had intercepted. And next morning he escorted me out to the road and said:

"You are now, sir, outside my land and therefore no longer my guest. Don't let me ever see you here again. I tolerate nothing in my place that is not my own—no man, no animal, no bird, no insect nor reptile, even—that will not obey my lightest order. And if the rumor gets back to me that you've been talking—"

"Well?" I challenged.

"I'll have you killed," he said simply.

**I** RETURNED to Box Springs at a slow jog-trot, thinking things over. Old Man Hooper's warning sobered me, but did not act as a deterrent of my intention to continue with the adventure. But how? I could hardly storm the fort single-handed and carry off the damsel in distress. On the evidence I possessed I could not even get together a storming-party. The cowboy is chivalrous enough, but human. He would not uprise spontaneously to the point of war on the mere statement of incarcerated beauty—especially as ill-treatment was not apparent. I would hardly last long enough to carry out the necessary proselyting campaign. It never occurred to me to doubt that Hooper would fulfill his threat of having me killed.

So when the men drifted in two by two at dusk, I said nothing of my real adventures, and answered their chaff in kind.

"He played the piano for me," I told them,—the literal truth,—  
"and had me into the parlor and dining-room. He gave me a room to myself with a bed and sheets; and he rode out to his pasture gate with me to say good-by." And thereby I was branded a delicious liar.

"They took me into the bunk-house and fed me, all right," said Windy Bill, "and fed my horse. And next morning that old Mexican Joe of his just nat'rally up and kicked me off the premises."

"Wonder you didn't shoot him!" I exclaimed.

"Oh, he didn't use his foot. But he sort of let me know that the place was unhealthy to visit more'n once."

I mulled over the situation all day, and then could stand it no longer. In the dark of the evening I rode to within a couple of miles of Hooper's Ranch, tied my horse and scouted carefully forward afoot. For one thing, I wanted to find out whether the system of high transoms extended to all the rooms, including that in the left wing; for another, I wanted to determine the "lay of the land" on that blank side of the house.

I found my surmise correct as to the transoms. As to the blank side of the house, that looked down on a wide green moist patch, and the irrigating-ditch with its stunted willows. Then painstakingly I went over every inch of the terrain about the ranch—and might just as well have investigated the external economy of a mud-turtle. Realizing that nothing was to be gained in this manner, I withdrew to my strategic base, where I rolled down and slept until daylight. Then I saddled and returned toward the ranch.

I had not ridden two miles, however, before in the boulder-strewn wash of Arroyo Seco I met Jim Starr, one of our men.

"Look here!" he said to me. "Jed sent me to look at the Elder Springs, but my horse cast a shoe. Cain't you ride up there?"

"I cannot," said I promptly. "I've been out all night and had no breakfast. But you can have my horse."

So we traded horses and separated, each our own way. They sent me out by Coyote Wells with two other men, and we did not get back until the following evening.

The ranch was buzzing with excitement. Jim Starr had not returned, although the ride to Elder Springs was only a two-hour affair. After a night had elapsed, and still he did not return, two men had been sent. They found him halfway to Elder Springs with a bullet-hole in his back. The bullet was that of a rifle. Being plainmen, they had done good detective work of its kind, and had determined by the direction of the bullet's flight as evidenced by the wound—that it had been fired from a point above. The only point above was the low "rim" that ran for miles down the Soda Springs Valley. It was of black lava and showed no tracks. The men, with a true sense of values, had contented themselves with covering Jim Starr with a blanket, and then had ridden the rim for some miles in both directions looking for a trail. None could be discovered. By this they deduced that the murder was not the result of chance encounter, but had been so carefully planned that no trace of the murderer or murderers would be left.

No theory could be imagined save the rather vague one of personal enmity. Jim Starr was comparatively a new-comer with us. Nobody knew anything much about him or his relations. Nobody questioned the only man who could have told anything; and that man did not volunteer to tell what he knew about the whole affair.

I refer to myself. The thing was sickeningly clear to me. Jim Starr had nothing to do with it. I was the man for whom that bullet from the rim had been intended. I was the unthinking, short sighted fool who had done Jim Starr to his death. It had never occurred to me that my midnight reconnoitering would leave tracks, that old man Hooper's suspicious vigilance would even look for tracks. But given that vigilance, the rest followed plainly enough. A skillful trailer would have found his way to where I had mounted; he would have followed my horse to Arroyo Seco, where I had met up with Jim Starr. There he would have visualized a rider on a horse without one shoe coming as far as the Arroyo, meeting me, and returning whence he had come, and me at once turning off at right angles. His natural conclusion would be that a messenger had brought me orders and had returned. The fact that we had shifted mounts, he could not have read, for the reason—as I only too distinctly remembered—that we had made the change in the boulder-and-rock stream-bed, which would show no clear traces.

The thought that poor Jim Starr, whom I had well liked, had been sacrificed for me, rendered my ride home with the convoy

more deeply thoughtful than even the tragic circumstances warranted. We laid his body in the small office, pending Buck Johnson's return from town, and ate our belated meal in silence. Then we gathered around the corner fireplace in the bunk-house, lighted our smokes and talked it over. Jed Parker joined us. Usually he sat with our owner in the office.

Hardly had we settled ourselves to discussion when the door opened and Buck Johnson came in. We had been so absorbed that no one had heard him ride up. He leaned his forearm against the doorway at the height of his head and surveyed the silenced group rather ironically.

"Lucky I'm not nervous and jumpy by nature," he observed. "I've seen dead men before. Still, next time you want to leave one in my office after dark, I wish you'd put a light with him, or tack up a sign, or even leave somebody to tell me about it. I'm sorry it's Starr and not that thoughtful old horned toad in the corner."

Jed looked foolish, but said nothing. Buck came in, closed the door and took a chair square in front of the fireplace. The glow of the leaping flames was full upon him. His strong face and bulky figure were revealed, while the other men sat in half-shadow. He at once took charge of the discussion.

"How was he killed?" he inquired. "Bucked off?"

"Shot," replied Jed Parker.

Buck's eyebrows came together.

"Who?" he asked.

He was told the circumstances, as far as they were known, but declined to listen to any of the various deductions and surmises.

"Deliberate murder and not a chance quarrel," he concluded. "He wasn't even within hollering distance of that rim-rock. Anybody know anything about Starr?"

"He's been with us about five weeks," proffered Jed, as foreman. "Said he came from Texas."

"He was a Texican," corroborated one of the other men. "I rode with him considerable."



"What enemies did he have?" asked Buck.

But it developed that, as far as these men knew, Jim Starr had no enemies. He was a quiet sort of fellow. He had been to town once or twice. Of course, he might have made an enemy, but it was not likely; he had always behaved himself. Somebody would have known of any trouble.

"Maybe somebody followed him from Texas—"

"More likely the usual local work," Buck interrupted. "This man Starr ever met up with old man Hooper or any of Hooper's men?"

But here was another impasse. Starr had been over on the Slick Rock ever since his arrival. I could have thrown some light on the matter, perhaps; but new thoughts were coming to me, and I kept silence.

Shortly Buck Johnson went out. His departure loosened tongues, among them mine.

"I don't see why you stand for this old *hombre* if he's as bad as you say," I broke in. "Why don't some of you brave young warriors just naturally pot him?"

And that started a new line of discussion that left me even more thoughtful than before. I knew these men intimately. There was not a coward among them. They had been tried and hardened and tempered in the fierceness of the desert. Any one of them would have twisted the tail of the devil himself; but they were off old man Hooper. They did not make that admission in so many words—far from it. And I valued my hide enough to refrain from pointing the fact. But that fact remained; they were off old man Hooper.

Furthermore, by the time they had finished recounting in intimate detail some scores of anecdotes dealing with what happened when old man Hooper winked his wildcat eye, I began in spite of myself to share some of their sentiments. For no matter how flagrant the killing, nor how certain morally the origin, never had the most brilliant or the most painstaking effort been able to connect with the slayers or their instigator. He worked in the dark by hidden hands; but the death from his hands was certain. Some of his victims, by luck or cleverness, seemed to have escaped sometimes as many as three or four attempts; but in the end the old man's killers got them.

A drummer who had grossly insulted Hooper in the Lone Star Emporium had, on learning the enormity of his crime, fled to San Francisco. Three months later Soda Springs awoke to find pasted by an unknown hand on the window of the Emporium a newspaper account of that drummer's taking-off. The newspaper could offer no theory, and merely recited the fact that the man suffered from a heavy-calibered bullet. But always the talk turned back at last to that crowning atrocity, the Boomerang, with its windrows of little calves, starved for water, lying against the fence.

"Yes," some one unexpectedly answered my first question at last, "some one could just naturally pot him, easy enough. But I got a hunch that he couldn't get fur enough away to feel safe afterward. The fellow with a hankering for a good, *useful* kind of suicide could get it right there. Any candidates? You-all been looking kinda mournful lately, Windy; s'pose you be the human benefactor and rid the world of this yere reptile."

"Me?" said Windy with vast surprise. "Me mournful? Why, I sing at my work like a little dicky bird. I'm so plumb cheerful, bull-frogs aint in it. You aint talking to me!"

But I wanted one more point of information before the conversation veered.

"Does his daughter ever ride out?" I asked.

"Daughter?" they echoed in surprise.

"Or niece, or whoever she is," I supplemented with some impatience.

"There's no women there, not even a Mex," said one; and, "Did you see any sign of any woman?" Windy Bill asked.

But I was not minded to be drawn.

"Somebody told me about a daughter, or niece, or something," I answered him vaguely.

I lay in my bunk and cast things up in my mind. The patch of moonlight from the window moved slowly across the floor. One of the men was snoring, but with a regularity that did not

annoy me. The outside silence was softly musical, with all the little voices that at Hooper's had been so disconcertingly lacking. There were crickets—I had forgotten about them—and frogs, and a hoot-owl, and various such matters, beneath whose influence customarily my consciousness merged into sleep so sweetly that I never knew when I had lost them. But I was never wider awake than now; and never had I done more concentrated thinking.

For the moment, and for the moment only, I was safe. Old man Hooper thought he had put me out of the way. How long would he continue to think so? How long before his men would bring true word of the mistake that had been made? Perhaps the following day would inform him that Jim Starr and not myself had been reached by his killer's bullet. Then, I had no doubt, a second attempt would be made on my life. Therefore whatever I was going to do must be done quickly.

I had the choice of war or retreat. Would it do me any good to retreat? There was the drummer who was killed in San Francisco; and others whose fates I have not detailed. But why should Hooper particularly desire my extinction? What had I done, or what knowledge did I possess that had not been equally done and known by any chance visitor to the ranch? I remembered the notes in my shirt pocket; and at the risk of awakening some of my comrades, I lighted a candle and studied them. They were undoubtedly written by the same hand. To whom had the other been smuggled? And by what means had it come into old man Hooper's possession? The answer hit me so suddenly, and seemed intrinsically so absurd, that I blew out the candle and lay again on my back to study it.

And the more I studied it, the less absurd it seemed, not by the light of reason, but by the feeling of pure intuition. I knew it as sanely as I knew that the moon made that patch of light through the window. The man to whom that other note had been surreptitiously conveyed by the sad-eyed, beautiful girl of the iron-barred chamber was dead; and he was dead because old man Hooper had so willed. And the former owners of the other notes of the "collection" concerning which the old man had spoken were dead too—dead for the same reason and by the same hidden hands.

Why? Because they knew about the girl? Unlikely. Without doubt Hooper had, as in my case, himself made possible that knowledge. But I remembered many things; and I knew that my flash of intuition, absurd as it might seem at first sight, was true. I recalled the swift, darting onslaughts with the fly-whackers, the fierce, vindictive slaughter of the frogs, his early-morning pursuit of the flock of migrating birds. To my recollection came the words spoken at breakfast.



I had not ridden two miles before I meet Jim Starr.



They found Jim Starr halfway to Elder Springs with a bullet-hole in his back. The murder had been carefully planned.

"This Hooper's on the light to me,





The jockey seemed to explode after the fashion of an overinflated ball. He leaped to his feet, hurled the chair against the door and ended by producing a small, wicked-looking automatic.

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"Everything inside the walls is mine! Mine—mine! Understand? I will not tolerate anything that is not mine, that does not obey my will, that does not come when I say come, go when I say go and fall silent when I say be still!"

My crime, the crime of these men from whose dead hands the girl's appeals had been taken for the "collection," was that of curiosity! The old man would within his own domain reign supreme, in the mental as in the physical world. The chance cowboy genuinely desirous only of a resting-place for the night rode away unscathed; but he whom the old man convicted of a prying spirit committed a lese-majesty that could not be forgiven. And I had made many tracks during my night reconnaissance.

The same flash of insight showed me that I would be followed wherever I went; and the thing that convinced my intuitions—not my reason—of this was the recollection of the old man stamping the remains of the poor little bird into the mud by the willows. I saw again the insane rage of his face; and I felt cold fingers touching my spine.

On this I went abruptly and unexpectedly to sleep, after the fashion of youth, and did not stir until Sing, the cook, routed us out before dawn. We were not to ride the range that day because of Jim Starr, but Sing was a person of fixed habits. I plunged my head into the face of the dawn with a new and light-hearted confidence. It was one of those clear, Nile-green sunrises whose lucent depths go back a million miles or so; and my spirit followed on wings. Gone at once were my fine-spun theories and my forebodings of the night. Life was clean and clear and simple. Jim Starr had probably some personal enemy. Old man Hooper was undoubtedly a mean old lunatic, and dangerous; very likely he would attempt to do me harm, as he said, if I bothered him again, but as for following me to the ends of the earth—

The girl was a different matter. She required thought. So, as I was hungry and the day sparkling, I postponed her and went in to breakfast.

## CHAPTER VI

BY the time the coroner's inquest and the funeral in town were over, it was three o'clock in the afternoon. As I only occasionally managed Soda Springs, I felt no inclination to hurry on the return-journey. My intention was to watch the limited train through, to make some small purchases at the Lone Star Emporium, to hoist one or two at McGru's and to dine sumptuously at the best—and only—hotel. A program simple in theme, but susceptible to variations.

The latter began early. After posing kiddishly as a rough, woolly romantic cowboy before the passengers of the limited, I found myself chaperoning a visitor to our midst. By sheer accident the visitor had singled me out for an inquiry.

"Can you tell me how to get to Hooper's ranch?" he asked.

So I annexed him promptly in hope of developments.

He was certainly no prize package, for he was small, pale, nervous, shifty and ratlike; and neither his hands nor his eyes were still for an instant. Further to set him apart, he wore a hard-boiled hat, a flaming tie, a checked vest, a coat cut too tight for even his emaciated little figure, and long toothpick shoes of patent leather. A fairer mark for cowboy humor would be difficult to find, but I had a personal interest and a determined character, and so the gang took a look at me and bided their time.

But immediately I discovered I was going to have my hands full. It seemed that the little shifty rat-faced man had been possessed of a small handbag which the negro porter had failed to put off the train, and which was of tremendous importance. At the discovery it was lacking, my new friend went into hysterics. He ran a few feet after the disappearing train; he called upon high Heaven to destroy utterly the race of negro porters; he threatened terrible reprisals against a delinquent railroad company; he seized upon a bewildered station-agent, over whom he poured his troubles in one gush; and he lifted up his voice and wept—literally wept! This to the vast enjoyment of my friends.

"What ails the small party?" asked Windy Bill, coming up.

"He's lost the family jewels!" "The papers are missing," "Sandy, here" (meaning me), "wont give him his bottle, and it's past feeding time," "Sandy's took away his stick of candy and wont give it back," "The little son-of-a-gun's just remembered that he give the nigger porter two bits," were some of the replies he got.

On the general principle of "Never start anything you can't finish," I managed to quell the disturbance; I got a description of the

bag, and arranged to have it wired for at the next station. On receiving the news that it could not possibly be returned before the following morning, my protégé showed signs of another outburst. To prevent it, I took him firmly by the arm and led him across to McGru's. He was shivering as though from a violent chill.

The multitude trailed interestedly after, but I took my man into one of McGru's private rooms and firmly closed the door.

"Put that under your belt," I invited, pouring him a half-tumbler of McGru's best, "and pull yourself together."

He smelled it.

"It's only whisky," he observed mournfully. "That wont help much."

"You don't know this stuff," I encouraged.

He took off the half-tumbler without a blink, shook his head and poured himself another. In spite of his skepticism, I thought his nervousness became less marked.

"Now," said I, "if you don't mind, why do you descend on a peaceful community and stir it all up because of the derelictions of an absent coon? And why do you set such store by your traveling bag? And why do you weep in the face of high Heaven and outraged manhood? And why do you want to find Hooper's ranch? And why are you and your vaudeville make-up?"

But he proved singularly embarrassed and nervous and uncommunicative, darting his glance here and there about him, twisting his hands, never by any chance meeting my eye. I leaned back and surveyed him in considerable disgust.

"Look here, brother," I pointed out to him, "you don't seem to realize. A man like you can't get away with himself in this country except behind footlights—and there aint any footlights. All I got to do is to throw open yonder door and withdraw my beneficent protection, and you will be set upon by a pack of ravening wolves with their own ideas of humor, among whom I especially mention one Windy Bill. I'm about the only thing that looks like a friend you got."

He caught at the last sentence only.

"You my friend?" he said breathlessly. "Then tell me: is there a doctor around here?"

"No," said I, looking at him closely, "not this side of Tucson. Are you sick?"

"Is there a drugstore in town, then?"

"Nary drugstore."

He jumped to his feet, knocking over his chair as he did so.

"My God!" he cried in uncontrollable excitement. "I've got to get my bag! How far is it to the next station where they're going to put it off? Aint there some way of getting there? I got to get to my bag."

"It's near to forty miles," I replied, leaning back.

"And there's no drugstore here? What kind of a bum tank-town is this, anyhow?"

"They keep a few patent-medicines and such over at the Lone Star Emporium—" I started to tell him. I never had a chance to finish my sentence. He darted around the table, grabbed me by the arm and urged me to my feet.

"Show me!" he panted.

We sailed through the barroom under full head of steam, leaving the gang staring after us open-mouthed. I could feel we were exciting considerable public interest. At the Lone Star Emporium the little freak looked wildly about him until his eyes fell on the bottle shelves. Then he rushed right in behind the counter and began to paw them over. I headed off Sol Levi, who was coming front making war-medicine.

"Loco," says I to him. "If there's any damage, I'll settle."

It looked like there was going to be damage, all right, the way he snatched up one bottle after another, read the labels, and thrust them to one side. At last he uttered a crow of delight, just like a kid.

"How many you got of these?" he demanded, holding up a bottle of soothing syrup.

"You only take a tablespoon of that stuff—" began Sol.

"How many you got—how much are they?" interrupted the stranger.

"Two—three dollars a bottle," says Sol, boosting the price.

The little man peeled a twenty off a roll of bills and threw it down.

"Keep the other five bottles for me," he cried in a shaky voice, and ran out, with me after him, forgetting his change and to shut the door behind us.

Back through McGru's bar we trailed, like one of these moving-picture chases, and into the back room.

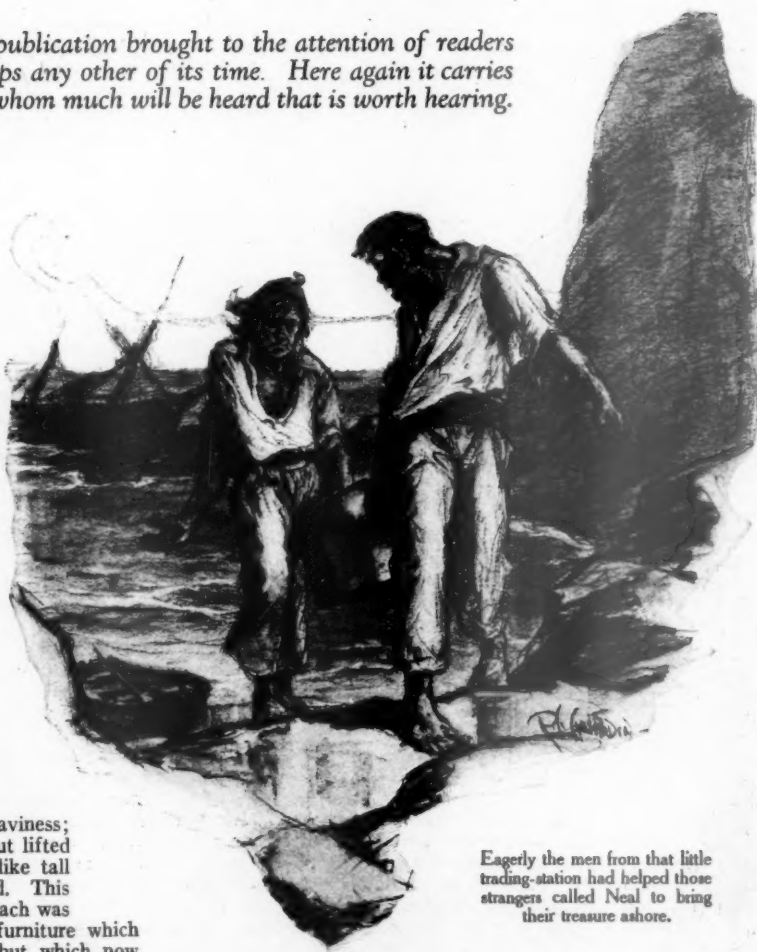
"Here we are, home again," said I. (Continued on page 158)

**T**HIS magazine has during its years of publication brought to the attention of readers the work of more new authors than perhaps any other of its time. Here again it carries out its policy in a story by a writer from whom much will be heard that is worth hearing.

# THE SECRET OF THE NEALS

By  
**NANCY SHORE**

Illustrated by  
**R. L. LAMBDIN**



Eagerly the men from that little trading-station had helped those strangers called Neal to bring their treasure ashore.

**T**HE room gave one the sensation of topheaviness; four overpowering pieces of black walnut lifted towering heads against the drab wall like tall altars whereat one might pray to a forgotten god. This room was only one of many in a great house, and each was crowded with the same overpowering furniture—furniture which had been grandly new in the days of long ago, but which now seemed dead, useless, standing about rooms where no one ever laughed or sang.

In this bedroom with the drab walls were two people, the two remaining descendants of the strange family of Neal. One was a sagging heap in the bleak bed, the other an erect, waiting figure in a chair beside the window.

The figure in the bed seemed as dead as the house, as dead as the ashes in the fireless black-onyx grate. She lay, a long shadow beneath the quilts, with two spots of life, her eyes, searching about for things to find fault with. Death leered at her from the corners of the room, beckoned to her from the dark of the house, threw his spell over her body, rendering it useless,—but still she ruled her home from her quilted throne.

In the straight hickory chair that her father had always used sat Roberta Neal—named for her grandfather, on the day of her advent, when she had made her first mistake, that of sex. Roberta Neal, named for that stern old Robert, sat sidewise on her chair, trembling, there beside the window, waiting for her mother to speak, longing for the sound of her voice, to tell her that she still lived.

The girl sat with one foot curved around a rung of the chair, one hand twisted tightly about the carved back of it, her mind on the past, her eyes on the little town below her—that little homelike town huddled there in its tight valley below the great Neal house. As Roberta stared over it, lights began to pick out the familiar places, weaving the whole town against the murky twilight, as a child weaves a picture in colored yarn on cardboard. The main street, with its garish stores and few office-buildings, the bridge, and then farther away a few cross-streets, dark lines with cozy home-lights winking from the windows of kitchens where people made suppers—crooked rows of lights which meant homes, and here and there a dark place which meant an unlit square where a church stood. Like a peculiar picture the town sprang out against the night, a picture wrapped in a protecting, moving, yellow veil which eddied and billowed up around the Neal hill as if it would hide the little town from the house upon it.

All the valley below the Neal house was filled with a whirling dust-storm which had been blowing all afternoon, rattling and tearing along, keeping people at home, making the world seem in the clutches of some huge, moving beast which at times appeared, dark, terrible, menacing—and then seemed to lift itself away and hide, a harmless thing of mere dust and wind. Roberta watched little shiftings of dust creep under the warped window of her mother's room. To-morrow she would have to clean the whole huge house, but now she would just sit there quietly beside the window, and watch the storm—waiting for her mother to speak.

As Roberta watched the town below her, she thought of all the years she had squandered there, in that great house on the hill-top—the house on the hill, which now contained only a frightened girl, an old woman who was dying, and—the Neal secret. She thought of the few happy times she could remember, long ago, before her grandfather died, before her own father had become custodian of the secret, before the secret had taken his life and pressed all the joy out of it. She thought about her mother, that woman there in the bed, whom she feared. There had been a time when they had been friends, she and her mother; but that was long, long ago, before her father's death, before the woman over there in the bed had become the holder of the secret.

Down the years came a memory of a sweet, laughing lady who had run and played with the little girl in the old orchard behind the house, who had made tea-parties beneath the peach-trees, who had buttoned the little girl's red boots across her fat ankles, and walked with her down the brick path in the evening, to meet her daddy. In the memories the little girl's mother held her hand and smoothed her curls, but every minute she glanced furtively about to see if the stern old grandfather were watching them, to see if he were frowning at them because she laughed. And the woman, that shadow with the glittering eyes over there in the bed, was the sweet, laughing lady—but for years and years she had been the holder of the Neal secret.



And soon, very soon, Roberta would be the custodian of the secret.

"Roberta, I want a handkerchief, one of the plain ones, there in the upper drawer." The whisper was quarrelsome; for moments the old lady had been trying to think of some demand which would make work for her daughter. Roberta knew that her mother, after the success of thinking up one desire, would begin a ceaseless stream of demands. It was always that way at twilight when the house was creaking, and the girl afraid to walk about in it.

She went over to the high dresser and opened the top drawer, letting her hands stray about among the things concealed there by the dusky shadows.

"Will you be careful, will you do as I tell you? Those things in that drawer are private; they are not for you—yet!" the old voice nagged from the bed.

The thin hands clutched the handkerchief, pushed it unused beneath the pillow.

"Now I want some beef-tea—in a plain cup, a plain blue kitchen cup," the woman whispered.

Roberta went slowly down the stairs. The wind and dust gathered in the curve of the banisters rushed up to meet her, moaning with a doleful sound. The empty, memory-haunted house was always dreadful at night, but now it was made more terrifying by the presence of death, death carrying the burden of the secret. The last Neal was afraid of the secret which she knew death was bringing her.

Roberta had peculiar glossy hair, black in the shadows, the color of a newly opened chestnut in the sunlight. It hung about her little white face like a wig, shadowing her cheeks and low forehead with damp curls. Her eyes were blue, the blue of the sea on a quiet day in summer; her nose was a pretty, tip-tilted little nose. She would have been happy-looking if so much of youth had not slid past without noticing her; she would have been very pretty if the years of her life which should have stood for joy had not been filled with sorrow. Time had sketched little hopeless lines about her mouth, making it droop. Roberta realized that she was not young any more—not young with the joy that belongs to youth, but very, very young in the things of the world. Her feet made no sound in their hideous felt slippers, things that her mother had owned. And it would take a great deal of care to make her hands white and beautiful again; hard work had spoiled them. There was none of the crafty gleam of the Neals in Roberta's eyes, that gleam which so startled one from the bed above. There was nothing secretive about Roberta; she seemed to have no "pride." She almost shuffled when she walked, because she was tired, and carrying wood up the long stairs had put a weary sway into her shoulders. As she stood beside the stove waiting for the kettle to boil, the glow from the coals cast a warm light over her little face, showing that in spite of the fact that she was not very young, she was very pathetic, very helpless, and very much afraid to become the guardian of the secret which had spoiled so many lives.

While the tea was gathering strength, she went into the dusty, silent dining-room and stood a minute before one of the three tall china-closets. In the half-light the rows of china gleamed with a pearly radiance beneath the glass doors, as if under water. She took one of the thin gold-banded things out and gazed at it a minute. For years and years the dishes had sat uselessly on the shelves. Roberta held the cup to her breast, her eyes turned toward the stairs, wondering if she dared please her mother

with a pretty tray. As she stood there thinking, the years rolled back and the dust-filled dining-room changed; dimly, very dimly, Roberta remembered certain great days, days of plenty, days of joy, the great carved table laden with silver, gleaming with the beautiful china. The other family of Neals, the ones from Heppner, were all there seated about the board. Anticipation was the joy of those feasts, because in reality no one ever laughed while attending them, and the older people frowned all the time. Her father, at one end of the table, her uncle from Heppner at the other, and in between, her mother, her aunt, and those boys from Heppner—and herself, the one girl in the Neal family! Roberta knew now that those feasts had been given to keep those boys from Heppner impressed with the greatness of the family. Those boy cousins of hers, they were all dead now, all of them. Otherwise Roberta would be the wife of one of them, and he would be the next custodian of the secret, and she would have a few more years of peace ahead of her.

"Slowpoke, slowpoke!" Her mother whined as Roberta handed her the aromatic tea in a plain blue kitchen cup. "You certainly aren't much like your family. No Neal ever let the grass grow beneath their feet the way you do—at least, not when they were young. They were wonderful men, all of them. But you are a girl, and there doesn't seem to be any real Neal blood in your veins." The old lady rattled the spoon against her teeth, thinking aloud as she sipped the tea, about her wonderful blood. "We were cousins, he and I, and his father sent away for his second cousin for a wife. We never spoiled our good blood. The one from Heppner sent back for his bride; we kept what we had pure. Took you to spoil the plan, took you to sully the name!"

From below came a jangling of the doorbell, and Roberta went padding down the stairs, her slippers slipping down the polished bare steps with a sound which was old and shuffling.

"Mother, it's the garbage-man; we owe him a dollar," she said, coming back and standing close to her mother's side.

"Get my purse from the box there in the closet. Tell him from now on we won't want him; you can burn the truck. Can't be dying thinking of you spending a dollar every once in a while for something you can burn or bury free. Never thought of it before," the old woman added bitterly. The girl let her fingers stray among the papers in the queer old leather box which she brought from the closet. "Roberta, keep your hands out of those papers; they are private," the mother whined.

"Mother, the man looked poor, and his little boy is on the wagon with him, in the worst rags! We can afford the dollar—I'm sorry for him."

"Sorrow never will buy you anything, my girl; I suppose if the man were single, you would get him to marry you, wouldn't you—like you did that grocery boy, eh?" the old voice in the shadows taunted.

Roberta's hand went to her heart as if some one had thrust a knife deep into an old wound. Her shoulders crumpled, and a little gasp slipped from her drooped mouth. With slow feet she turned away from the bed.

Once again she sat beside the window, staring out over the storming world, thinking about her mother's words. Outside, it looked as if something had been trying to wreck the world, and having failed, was still just hurling and whirling things

about in a mad fury of disappointment. Beneath the clouds, showing brightly through the darkening evening, was a thin streak of clearest silvery blue. It was always that way in the west, in the evening after a dust-storm.

Roberta watched that thin streak of blue, with the gray clouds



"Being as we're relatives, Roberta O'Neil, I come, bringing my neighbors with me."

above it hanging like a heavy curtain edged with splendid silver fringe—a curtain hung there to hide something wonderful, of which the blue was just a tiny promise. She wished, as she so often had, that it might slowly rise, and show her what was out there beyond. For it was from out there beyond that her people had come. Just as that curtain of cloud hid all the green fields and shining rivers and wooded hills, and the sea of the west—just so did it seem to hide all the past of her family. Out of the beyond had come two men of the same name—two Neals. Years and years before, they had come into this dry country, when the only trains were pack-trains, and slow, white-covered wagons. But unlike the real pioneers, these two Neals had not come here into the new land to gain a fortune, to fight for a home—not they! They came to settle, to be the same proud, overbearing people they had been in the land of the beyond. The great house of Neal had been built on its hilltop just as soon as men and oxen could bring in the materials. And on another dry hilltop some twenty miles away the other man named Neal had built him his great house. And then slowly came the two villages at the edge of the Neal hills. No one in those two villages ever really knew the Neals, just as now no one knew Roberta. When it was time for a man of Neals to marry, he went into the country beyond and got himself a wife, or else married one of the other Neals, from the other great house. Queer, remote people, living alone, holding the secret that they had come into the far-off edge of a new continent to hide, in the dry heart of eastern Oregon.

**G**REAT days—ah, yes, there had been great days for the family of Neal. Fine things were brought into their houses, wonderful treasures to garner away, things from the lands across the seas, silks and ivories and laces. Dust now lay thick upon carved chests of teakwood, chests which had been unopened for years, filled with things which had come around the Horn, on up the coast, and then perchance overland and up the great river. But no one ever talked of those great days; no tales of palm-dotted isles or far countries were ever whispered to the children of the house of Neal by those stern old men.

Aye, the great-days were done, as were the great Neals, for in all the world there was just one frightened girl who had the right to learn the secret which had changed so many lives. In any list of great calamities one will find accounts of the time when the dry country of eastern Oregon was swamped with terrible cloudbursts, when for once the valleys between those dry brown hills saw more water than they could hold. That torrid, still summer Sunday when the people of Heppner laughed at the Indians who pointed to the dark clouds and told them to run far and high into the hills, because soon there would be more water than the narrow valley could hold. Everyone had laughed in scorn, and almost everyone had perished. And that was why there was only one house of Neal left, and only one frightened girl to learn the secret.

The secret and the fortune, and the changing of people, those three things seemed to arrive always with death at the house of Neal. For when the eldest Neal died, and the next in line read the will and came into the fortune, he changed. Everyone who knew the secret changed. The men of the family became stern, scoffing; the women became selfish monsters.

One Neal as he waited for his turn at the fortune made the house on the hill the show place of the town. Walks and pathways were laid out, fountains, and flower beds. Yes, and there had been little red shoes for a little girl who had soft, dark curls about a tiny heart-shaped face. Later Roberta had even gone away to a convent for a year or two—and there had been a time of graduating, and a soft silk dress—great days, long past.

For there had come a day when her father became guardian of the secret, when her mother was changing from that sweet, laughing lady into a nervous, frightened creature. Roberta had stood beside the kitchen door, watching the face of the young man who every day brought groceries to the house. Each day that boy came whistling up to the door, and each day Roberta watched his face. From the room above, Roberta could hear her father's footsteps as he paced back and forth, back and forth, like a caged animal. Beyond in the lonely dining-room sat her mother, alone at one side of the great table, mending over and over again a shawl which had been her grandmother's.

No sounds of life in the great house of Neal, no memory in two people's hearts of hours spent in a garden, of twilight times, when one planned how to spend a fortune—no memory of evenings and going down the walk, holding a little girl's hand. And the boy was whispering about things that Roberta did not know. Came a day when she had walked boldly down the hill with that boy, and when she came back up again she was his wife.

For five years the sufferings of that tortured hour of married life had seemed to strike Roberta time and again like a cruel whip. How bravely the boy had told her father what they had done! He would show them how well he could care for their daughter, he had proudly said. Her mother had screamed at her like a vengeance-seeking witch; and her father had pushed the young man out toward the door. Poor Roberta had stood with her hands pressed against her burning cheeks, her lips shaking, while her family stripped her life bare of romance and love, and joy and even youth—even bare of peace. At last she realized that she was a Neal, to whom the fortune and its secret would come; she was not really a person who could choose to love and live. She was a thing born to guard a secret made by some one else years before.

To-day, sitting beside the darkening window, with the eyes of the old woman in the bed piercing her, she remembered the pitiful, few days of love in her life: patches of red and blue, slipping up and down the snow-covered hill before the house; a lonely girl, watching life and youth at her very door; the joy of daring to sneak out one snowy night to join the coasters; the one boy among those merry people she knew. And then she thought of the other nights—and the hasty marriage. The boy had sworn that he would make a fortune which would have no stain and no secret. He had flung himself away from Roberta, out into that world that she did not know. The marriage had been annulled, and after that there was a great house in which there lived a lonely girl who knew what it was not to have one friend in all the world.

How long and how mirthlessly her father had laughed when he told Roberta that the boy had left town, that he had gone away. That boy named O'Neil whom she had married, changing her name from Neal to O'Neil, and becoming, because of her one trip into the homes of the town, and a few words spoken over her by an amazed minister, one of a happy, laughing family of Irish people who lived in a grove just below the great Neal house. Yes, the boy named O'Neil had gone away, her father shouted, laughing at her shaking shoulders, and perhaps Fate would be kind enough to let her alone now, so that she could garner the secret and the fortune for them—poor, useless thing that she was.

For five years fate and sorrow had been marking little lines on Roberta's pretty face. Sitting there in that twilight room, she wondered if by any chance that happy, laughing boy were dead. All things may happen to one out in the world in five years; nothing may happen to one shut in a great house on a hilltop. And yet, in a way, she was glad he was gone. . . . In one of those unused rooms downstairs were books, and Roberta remembered a fat yellow volume that told about the gallant Frenchmen who had escaped the swords of Revolution to sail away in high-decked ships to some wonderful tropic isles, where for centuries they had lived, marrying and intermarrying, keeping their blood pure, until now, down there in that land of life and abundance, one finds only a handful of chattering, white-faced idiots, with the purest blood in the world running sluggishly through their veins. For two hundred years that little group of brave men had been dying, and Roberta, remembering the story, thought it much more merciful to meet death in one harsh moment than to have him walking just behind you for years and years. Why should that brave boy, that boy who knew so well how to laugh and sing, who had called her sweet, gentle names and smoothed her heavy hair from her white forehead, why should he have the life and youth pressed slowly out of him by a family of secret-worshipping misers?

**"M**EN go down to the sea in ships—aye, and men come back from the sea in twos—never more," the old voice from the bed croaked, and Roberta turned slowly about, afraid to move, afraid to make any noise. Silence again in the gaunt room; and then the breath of the dying woman began to come rattling, rasping.

Down the hill ran Roberta, stumbling, slipping, afraid almost of the sound of the doorbell on the doctor's front door, afraid to ask him to come back with her to the house of Neal. And then the sensation of being the chief actor in a bad dream came to her, as once more she stood beside her mother's bed and heard the doctor say that there was need of haste; her mother must hurry and set her house in order: she was soon to set out upon the Great Journey.

The glinting eyes stirred beneath their leaden lids, and Roberta knew that her mother had heard the doctor's warning. The girl lighted a tiny blue bead of gas, and then went slipping downstairs to lock the great house up. From room to room she wandered, restless, as if expecting a guest, afraid to go upstairs and help her mother greet death. She straightened a shutter, lifted a

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Roberta went swaying, dancing through the halls. Mockingly she stood before the pictures of the dead and gone O'Neils, singing a song which meant freedom and peace.



book, gazed at the portraits of the other long-gone Neals, those proud people who had served the family so well. They had done with pride the thing they had been born to do; they had not shirked in their duty; dearly she stood on the hearth where her grandfather had hid his gold. Slowly she crept to the foot of the stairs, listening. A voice floated down, a mocking, taunting voice, a voice which had once belonged to a laughing lady:

"And even in the desert you cannot hide the sins of the sea."

Laughter, hollow laughter, echoed bitterly down the stairway to the ears of the girl who listened. And as if in answer to that laughter Roberta seemed to hear a baby crying—a little foundling that, years before, some one had left on the marble doorstep, asking for a share of the garnered fortune. And Roberta, standing there listening to her mother's mad, dying laughter, remembered how bitterly that same woman had laughed as she carried the little waif down the hill to the poorhouse—the little foundling, who had not even received milk at the door of the great house. Roberta had been knitting a shawl for her head, and all unwillingly her fingers had formed the shell edge to a baby-cap. Her mouth twisted now, and her eyes filled with tears, as through the years she remembered that sound of a little baby's crying.

She was no garnering Neal, this trembling girl, there in the dusty hall; she was just the frightened offspring of a long line of intermarrying misers.

Slowly, her hand slipping along the cold banister, the girl climbed the stair, pulling herself up to the room where her mother had waited for her. But she had not waited alone; the expected guest had come, and gone again.

Roberta stared from the doorway. Her mother lay before her strong leather chest, her thin arms stretched across it, her face turned toward the door, waiting for her daughter. Was there something that she had wanted to tell her child, something that her icebound heart had wanted to explain, to warn her about? After all, Death had played a ghastly joke on the house of Neal; it had left Roberta the garnerer, unprepared.

ALL the town went to the funeral; they all wanted to see the inside of the house on the hill. Death, they murmured, must have come very suddenly to the old lady to find her all alone that way. They did not realize that she had been dying for nearly a hundred years, ever since the first Neal laid down the law of the garnerer. The town flocked up the hill, and stared at Roberta, sitting there, so silently, beside the coffin. She did not weep; she was too busy thinking, too badly frightened, too poignantly haunted by those unopened boxes of papers that were hers, and hers alone.

With all these strange people filling the house, she had been waiting for hours and hours, it seemed, for them to bury her mother. She was waiting for them to be done with this business of death. She did not want to mourn her mother; she wanted to run away, because her mind did not seem big enough to grasp the secret and the fortune which had changed so many people.

What was that the minister was saying about moth and rust and treasure on earth?

Yes, that was it; she must be very, very careful and not let moths get into those papers which were so valuable.

Suddenly she knew that she was too tired to sit there beside the coffin any longer; she could not hear the people singing; nor could she see the old, worn face there upon its shining satin pillow. She only heard a little girl laughing, and saw a pretty woman running under misty pink peach-blossoms, in a long-past springtime.

At last it was over, that time of sitting there, and being so tired. She was going up her own curved marble steps into her own house. The funeral surely had been finished out there in the cemetery,

on that dry brown hillside where the graves looked like yellow mounds of dead grass. But even so, she was not alone; all around her were people, going up the steps ahead of her, coming up behind her. Vaguely she saw women and girls carrying things into her house.

Friends born of her sorrow had come to sit with her, to keep her from being alone. She who had no friends had been given a houseful by death.

"Should I boil the kettle? Does one feed them?" Roberta wondered.

But no, they wanted to feed her. They swarmed into the house, carrying fruit cake and pudding, platters of cold meat made festive with parsley. Roberta stared at them stupidly. Coming to her through the years, she saw a familiar face, the withered, kindly face of Mary O'Neil, mother of that boy she had married. The old lady carried a bowl of vegetable soup, thick vegetable soup.

"Being as we're relatives, Roberta O'Neil, I come, bringing my neighbors with me."

Relatives—a new word! Strangers in the house of Neal talking of being relatives! Roberta turned away to hide her burning cheeks. In fear she listened for a nagging voice to float down from above—but no, it was all right to have a relative.

Death had come to the little town, and had removed not only life but restraint and memory. The Neal splendor was forgotten with the strangeness of the family and the secret; the women of the village knew that help was needed in the great house on the hill, and they had come to Roberta bearing the best they had. It was a custom of the country, but the girl was afraid of them.

Timidly she ate what they gave her, ate from a gold-banded dish, drank from a crystal goblet.

"Poor child—poor, poor girl!" the women muttered, going down the hill in little groups of two and three. "She's scared, she's just scared."

"I know where he is," one woman whispered, smoothing Roberta's forehead and patting her hands. "I'm sending for him this night. Don't you be after worrying, little daughter."

Alone at last, Roberta knew just what she must do, just what every Neal did upon the night of a funeral. She must learn the secret, and start in upon her duties as a garnerer.

THE night darkened; purple twilight settled into black shadows; the stars came early. Once again, as if to remind her, a little wind sprang up, rattling leaves about the house, with the sound of rustling papers. Holding a candle high above her head Roberta started for the stairs. The wavering light traveled before her like a moving, bluish finger. From the dining-room came the faint, festive odor of cake, of meat, and then the homelike, kindly smell of soup. Roberta paused, tears slipping down her cheeks. She did not want to learn the secret; she did not want to own the fortune—she wanted to be a plain country-woman. More than anything else in the world, she wanted to carry vegetable soup to some one in trouble. . . . But when had a Neal ever failed in the trust put upon him? Had a Neal ever betrayed the secret? With one last look back down the stairs, she turned the knob and went into her mother's room.

The wind raced ahead of her, guttering the candle down to a mere blue thread. Her feet slid over the floor as if by sneaking she could allay her fears, as if by coming into the secret places in silence she could quiet the spirits of the people she belonged to.

The room seemed unfamiliar to her, a place where she had never ventured before. The empty bed frightened her. She turned toward the dresser, that place of secrets, and opened the top drawer. Her breath, coming in jerks, showed in a tiny white cloud against the coldness of the room.

Her hand trembled upon an old-fashioned handkerchief-case, satin, and stiff with hand-painted lilies-of-the-valley. Beside it

was the companion piece, a glove-case. Roberta's face was the color of wet newspaper as she knelt before the drawer, her hands dipping among forbidden things.

The handkerchiefs she knew, (Continued on page 120)



"What have we, the laborers of the world, to do with national flags?" he cried, and there was a little murmur that ought to have warned him.

WHEN Bolshevism raised its snaky head in the native heath of Cap'n Bill Titus, once of the Rangers of the Lone Star State, he realized that the time had come for a return to ancient methods. And it worked, albeit curiously.

## A HUNCH ON HEREDITY

By J. FRANK DAVIS

Illustrated by WORTH D. GRIFFIN



**B**ILL TITUS, in the oil-boom city of Spiller, sat with his ear pressed to the receiver and listened gravely to the voice of the Governor of Texas, talking from Austin.

"So that's the story, Captain," the Governor concluded. "Sheriff McGovern could handle it if he were there, but he's gone up into Oklahoma to get a prisoner. The chief of police is sick in bed, and the mayor—well, you know the mayor."

"Votes to be lost, perhaps, one way or the other," Bill commented.

"Exactly. He's afraid there's going to be a riot, and has called on me. I'm sending Captain Dalton and four of his Rangers to take charge, if necessary, but they can't get to Spiller until about eight o'clock to-morrow morning, even if the train is on time, which it usually isn't, I am told. And we don't want any bloodshed to grow out of that meeting to-night. It is easier to stop trouble before it gets started than after."

"I understand. All right, suh. What do you want me to do?"

"Whatever is necessary. None of these strikers is connected with any of the oil-companies you are interested in, I hear."

"Nary one. I've been a little particular about who got jobs with me lately, and every boss and driller in my outfits is a Texan. These fellers that are making the trouble are mostly from outside—not foreigners, I don't mean, although quite a few of them are, at that, but outsiders. My men aint affected; they aint even in sympathy with the strikers. Properly speaking, it isn't a labor trouble a-tall, and there haven't many regular honest-to-God Texans got bit with this Bolshevik bug yet. Aint in the Texas blood to catch it."

"That is what I understood. You can depend on your own men to back you up, if there is any difficulty. And there must be quite a few other men that you know over there—ol'-timers—who would stay with you if it was necessary."

"I can find a few. They'd hang on their old guns and—"

"But that is exactly what I don't want," the Governor protested. "I want things held just as they are until Dalton and his men arrive. I know you and your friends would be there with the gun-play if it was necessary, but I want to see this mess settled without any violence if it can be done. There are enough States in the Union getting a reputation for having to put down what the Reds can call 'labor uprisings' without Texas. And yet that meeting to-night is loaded with dynamite. It will take some able diplomacy to prevent these men who are agitating for the 'one big union' from getting trouble going. I think you are the man who can do it. Of course, if you try and don't succeed, then your ol'-timer friends can be prepared—"

"I get you," Bill rejoined as the Governor left the balance of his sentence to be imagined. "I don't advertise to be any world statesman, but I'll do the best I can, of course. What kind of authority have I got?"

"The best there is. I'll appoint you temporarily a Ranger, assigned to special service—and your service is to keep order in Spiller until Bob Dalton gets there. Your commission will be made out and signed in less than fifteen minutes. You wont have it in your possession, but it will be here, and I'll have the adjutant-general call up the mayor and tell him you are in charge. The mayor will be so glad he'll want to come down here and kiss me."

"That's all right," Captain Titus agreed, "but maybe it would be just as well, suh, if the mayor didn't tell anybody except maybe a few police officers, so as to keep them from interferin' with whatever I have to do—and a deputy sheriff or so. I haven't got any plan yet, natchully, but if you want this thing handled without trouble, diplomatic and so forth, perhaps it would be just as well if the general public didn't know the exact lay of the land unless I decide to tell 'em."



"How long since you left the Rangers, Sam?" inquired Captain Titus. "Twelve years." "Too long a furlough. You're back in again."

"But in that event, will they believe you?"

"Some of 'em will, all those that know me. And the rest can be convinced."

The Governor thought this over a moment. "Very well," he agreed. "I'm leaving the whole business in your hands. You know the men who are doing the really dangerous agitating, don't you? I don't mean the bona fide workmen who have been led into it; I mean the Reds."

"I know three of them, the three worst. Raber is the leader—from Chicago. Christiansen, from the Lord knows where—he's the one that says he is a North Dakota farmer and talks a bunch of arguments no farmer with brains would use, in North Dakota or anywhere else. And Mullins, from Cleveland, is the one that raised all that Hades last month up in the Territory, until it got so hot he thought he and Oklahoma had better part company."

"I have some information about Raber," the Governor said. "His name used to be Rabowski, and before he got into the I. W. W. game, he was a gunman in Chicago. He used to have charge of the 'persuasion squads' that some of those radicals hired to strong-arm workmen who were satisfied with their jobs and weren't willing to strike. Very handy with firearms, the police up there say. Watch him. He shoots through his pocket."

"I will. Any other information you can give me?"

"You know who the speakers are to be to-night, I suppose?"

"No. The drillers on our properties say they understand these outside leaders aint even going to be on the platform. The speakers are to be local officers of the 'wobblies.' Raber and the others are probably figuring two things—first, that they wont be so likely to get anything proved on them if anything starts, and second, maybe, that they can stir up more trouble scattered in the audience."

"Young Travis Hudston hasn't arrived there yet, I take it."

"Thunder! Is he coming?"

"I hear he is to be the principal speaker. Do you know him?"

"Know him! The cussed little fool! His daddy and me were in the Rangers together. I was with ol' Jack when Bill Tungley's gang of hawse-thieves were rounded up and Jack killed Tungley; him and me were friends up to the time of his death, and I was

there when that happened, too. I haven't seen Travis for some years; he hasn't been in Texas much since he grew up. But I've kept track of him." Bill's voice reflected the disgust he felt.

"They say he's a convincing speaker. Maybe it would be best to get him as soon as he hikes into town, and hike him out again."

"No suh, if you'll excuse me. The one thing these fellers want is for somebody to tell 'em they cain't hold that meeting, or to keep their speakers from talking. No suh—it wouldn't do. I wouldn't do a-tall."

"All right," the Governor said. "I'm putting you in charge. Handle it any way you want to. But prevent disorder if it is humanly possible. If it isn't—well, in that case, don't let any bad men take charge of that town, whether they call themselves labor-leaders or thugs."

"They wont, suh," Bill assured him. "We'll do what we can not to have any outbreak. Is there anything else?"

"Not that I think of. You can look for Dalton and his men to-morrow morning. Keep the lid on until then, if you can."

For perhaps five minutes after the receiver had been restored to its hook, Captain Bill sat in concentrated thought. Then he walked briskly out of the hotel and turned in at a store, the some what striking sign of which, emblazoned across the front of a spraddling, one-story frame building with a false second-story front, proclaimed to the world that Sam W. Burns there purveyed to the public's need for "Lumber, Hardware, Paints, Coffins, Caskets and Furniture."

Mr. Burns, a tall, slim, leathery, coatless man, was attending to the wants of a customer, and Bill slipped into the little partitioned office in a front corner. Burns joined him as soon as the customer had departed, began a jocular greeting, peered into Bill's face and saw an expression there that discouraged persiflage, at once broke off to demand, sharply but quietly: "What's up?"

"How long since you left the Rangers, Sam?" inquired Titus.

"Twelve years."

"It's too long a furlough. You're back in again."

"Whatever's the rule," Mr. Burns agreed with resignation. "How come?"

"At the request of the Governor—temporarily. There's a chance of trouble here to-night, and he's elected me to prevent it with what assistance I want to call for from ol'-timers and such



"I'm getting a little along in years for excitement, and I hoped the rest of my life was going to be quiet," Mr. Burns declared, with an expression in his eye that directly contradicted his words, "but I happened to clean up my li'l ol' six-gun only last week."

"That's *muy bueno*. If there's got to be any shootin', nobody would expect us to stand around and let somebody else do all of it—but the rules of this game the Governor has asked us to sit into mostly provide for peaceful persuasion. It's thisaway." Briefly Bill reviewed the State executive's conversation. "After Bob Dalton gets here, he can have shootin' or not, just as the cards happen to fall. Our business is to keep things from breakin' wide open till he arrives."

"Where does Bob Dalton come in with any more ability to handle trouble than some others?" Burns grumbled. "You was bossin' a comp'ny of Rangers—and I was one of the comp'ny—when he first joined out with the Service. You and me and six or seven others that we can pick up in half an hour—"

"That's exactly what I want you to do, Sam. Pick up the six or seven others; there aint much time, and I've got to take a ride out Mule Creek way and be back in time for the night performance. And as for Bob Dalton and his boys, don't get jealous. They're getting paid for mixin' into ruckuses these days, and we aint—and these bad *hombres* know it, or at least the Texas part of 'em do, and will tell the others. When five Rangers 'light off that maw'nin' train and the cap'n says whatever he finds it advisable to say 'in the name of the State of Texas,' they're going to sit up on their hind legs and take a whole lot of notice. *You* with your regrets that you can't live a life of peace! You bloodthirsty old man! You're honin' for a fight so bad you're envyin' Cap'n Bob—and forgettin' that when Rangers come into a town and remark that they're all ready for trouble and rarin' to go, ninety-nine times out of a hundred that's right where trouble ceases."

"But why can't *you* say 'in the name of the State of Texas' as well as he can? And follow it up appropriate if they don't listen."

"Maybe I'll have to; that remains to be seen. But if I do, it'll call for some explanation, and sometimes, when things get to goin' thataway, there aint time for explanation. When Dalton and his men get here, everybody knows they're Rangers, and there don't have to be any explainin'."

"But—"

"And anyway, the Governor has laid out how he wants this party conducted, and she's got to be done like he says. And if these six or seven ol'-timers you're going to collect for me while I'm out on Mule Creek are as violent-minded as you are, just tell 'em to contain themselves. They're to prepare for war but strive for peace."

Burns sighed, but nodded agreement. "All right," he said. "I'll see they strive for it, but I aint figurin' I can make them *hope* for it. The way these roughnecks from up in Chicago and New York and around thataway have come into this community aimin' to run it—"

"That's the argument," Bill interrupted enthusiastically. "I'll use it."

"When?"

"At what these efficiency sharps call the psychological moment."

"I don't *sabe* this psychology thing," Burns admitted.

"But you used it, constant, when you were in the Rangers. Every man in the Service is strong for psychological stuff, whether he knows what the word means or not. And there's another thing I'm a believer in: heredity. You knew Jack Hudston?"

"I been in some excitement with him, one time 'n' another."

"Yes. What was his weakness?"

"I don't seem to remember he had any to speak of. You wouldn't call that laughin' habit of his a weakness."

"Didn't you ever see him lose his head a little—that time he taken charge of San Pedro County, for instance?"

"Oh, that! He was hoorawed. That sheriff he was removin' made him look sort of ridiculous."

"And he went plumb loco for a minute and did the wrong thing."

"The rest of us saved it from doing any harm."

"Exactly. But if he hadn't had the rest of us— Ol' Jack must be wriggling in his grave if he knows what that ornamental son of his is saying and doing, these days, but I'm betting the kid has got some of the old man's traits, and that might be one of them."

"Well, even so—" Burns commented uncomprehendingly.

"That's where maybe the psychology business comes in. Heredity plus psychology equals—"

"What?"

"You can't tell till you add 'em up. And you can't add 'em up till you get 'em set down in a column, one on top of the other. . . . I'm driftin' toward Mule Creek; you rustle around and get your ol'-timers. If you can stretch that six or seven into ten or a dozen, better and better. And have 'em all on the edges of the crowd, to-night, with their guns out of sight, and make 'em understand, never mind what happens, they aint to mix into anything unless I give 'em the high-sign."

"Where'll you be?"

"If luck breaks right, I'll be on the platform. That's another thing that depends on this psychology business—and sometimes psychology works like you think she's going to, and sometimes she works different, and you have to do your planning all over again."

"Yeah," Mr. Burns agreed, frankly puzzled. "Well, you're the dealer."

"And aimin' some to run a sandy," Bill vouchsafed as an additional bit of information. "You tell your boys they are all called on by me to aid the Ranger Service in case anything gets to going. The State backs 'em up."

An hour later Captain Bill stood beside his little automobile on the property of the Three Counties Oil Company, which he owned, in earnest conversation with Gillespie, the superintendent.

"All told, then, you don't believe more than a quarter of the drillers in the whole field are really tied up to this 'seize the source of production' idea."

"Less than that," Gillespie declared. "Not an eighth! But that isn't saying *more* than a quarter wouldn't participate if anything rough gets started. It might be more than half. A lot of the foreigners in the field are really believers in anarchy and direct action and all that, and I'm not sure they couldn't carry a big gang of the others with them if they took charge, and disorder really began."

"Texans, most of the others, aint they?"

"A majority of the men in the field must be Texans."

"Texans don't run to anarchy much."

Gillespie, himself born in the State, smiled.

"No," he agreed, "but some of these drillers are a



Hudston stiffened. "Then you and I are on opposite sides in this controversy!"



"Jack Hudston left almost six hundred thousand dollars,"—Bill was grinning broadly now,—"every cent to this young soft-handed, tea-table workingman." He wheeled on Hudston and mapped a question: "When are you going to divide it?"

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wild lot, and excitement sure appeals to them. They don't aim to be anarchists,—they couldn't define the word right,—but that doesn't prevent 'em loving a ruckus once in a while. It has been a fairly peaceful place, this Spiller field, and a lot of 'em must be getting sort of tired of so much harmony. They aint Bolsheviks —but that don't mean they mightn't welcome a little rough diversion."

Bill nodded gravely. "In other words, they're the same kind of harum-scarum young hellions the cow-punchers used to be."

"You've hit it, Cap'n. They don't *mean* to be anarchists; yet if these 'wobblies' were to get anything going—"

"But they are Texans," Bill said thoughtfully. "Daddies rode pitchin' hawses, and branded steers, and helped a sheriff catch a rustler, maybe, or if there wasn't a sheriff handy, hitched on fire-arms and administered a little law themselves. And most of 'em think quite highly of the State of Texas."

"What are you driving at, Cap'n?"

"I was sort of considering this heredity thing—that and youthful environment." Gillespie smiled quietly at his employer's use of the long words; he knew Bill usually saved his more correct and cultured manner of speech for the visits he made to the great cities outside Texas, and adhered, at home, to the dialect of his youth. "These young roughnecks might be swung into action one way by sheer love of excitement and a good scrap, you say. They could be swung the other way, maybe, by—" He stopped, and eyed the nearest tire speculatively.

"By what?" Gillespie prompted, after many seconds.

"I aint sure. I've got to think that over. Meantime, you have those five drillers you can absolutely trust at to-night's meeting like I said."

"One at Raber's elbow, one beside Christiansen, one close to Mullins, the other two sticking to those two agitators that came in yesterday from the North that we don't know so much about."

"That's it. If we were to put ol'-timers to following those *hombres* around and keeping close to 'em, they'd be shore to get suspicious. Drillers will be different. They'll never notice 'em, or if they do, they'll think the boys are keeping handy to 'em just out of admiration. And impress it on that big husky Kernan that you say is good in a rough-and-tumble, who is to stick close to Raber, that Raber has a reputation for shooting through his pocket. If trouble starts—"

"You can bank on Kernan. Raber's hand wont get as far as his pocket."

"All set, then," Bill said, and climbed into his car. "I don't know just how the meeting is going to shape up,—I'm making some medicine for that which may work and may not,—but tell your fellers to keep their eyes in my general direction, and when I give the signal, if I do, to take care of those five leaders. My ol'-timers will 'tend to the rest."

"Say, Cap'n, why can't I get into this?" Gillespie fretted.

"You can stand on the outskirts and be a spectator. I dasn't let you be active in the crowd, because you're a representative of blood-suckin' capital."

"But you are going to be in it, and you are the blood-sucking capital I represent."

"Not to-night," Bill declared, as he reached over for the self-starter. "To-night I'm the State of Texas." He let in his clutch. "With diplomatic trimmings!" he called back over his shoulder.

**T**RAVIS HUDSTON, born an American but influenced by a notoriety-seeking professor of economics to turn into the mad paths of what is called "internationalism" by those who are not careful of their definitions, did not conceal his surprise when Captain Titus came cordially through the little knot of syndicalist leaders and local strikers that surrounded him in the office of the hotel.

"Welcome to our fair city, Trav," the Captain hailed. "It must be all of ten years since I've seen you. But we've kept track of you, here in Texas. We've kept track of you."

Young Hudston, who had been of the impression that all his father's friends who had kept track of him had done so disappearingly, warmed to the greeting, although Raber the Chicagoan, who stood at his shoulder, scowled. "Howdy, Cap'n Titus!" he said, with a conscious relapse into the idiom of his boyhood. "I didn't expect to see you up here. Aren't you still hanging out at Summertown?"

"I hang out where my hat does," Bill laughed, "at Summertown a little, at San Ntonio more, up here some. I'm interested in one or two of these oil-properties here in Spiller."

Hudston stiffened. "Then you and I are on opposite sides in this controversy!"

"Not necessarily," smiled Bill, "not necessarily. There isn't any strike on my properties; your friends here will tell you I pay as good wages as any operator in the field." He beamed pleasantly in the direction of Raber and Christiansen. "And I don't know 's any workman ever had occasion to call me names. Maybe that's because I remember how it seemed to be a workman myself. Your daddy and me weren't exactly what you could call gentlemen of leisure when we were young fellers, you know." Bill turned to the bystanders. "This boy's daddy was some able citizen, if you ask me. Hearing, as we have down thisaway, that Tray, here, was making a name for himself up in New York and all, we aint been surprised a bit. Not a little bit!" He beamed with pride on Hudston. "He comes from stock that has been in the habit of making a name for itself."

The young man looked pleased but a little perplexed. Bill, swiftly appraising him, observed that he was as good-looking as he had promised to be when a child, but that city life had developed him unkindly. His black hair, pushed back from his forehead, contrasted with a complexion that was pale and a little pasty. His muscles had gained little exercise in the years he had been mixing with intense, whole-souled lovers of individual freedom in the breeding-places of intellectual socialism; he was flabby and ill-conditioned. He was about thirty-one now; by and by, not many years hence, he would be fat.

**H**UDSTON, puzzled and gratified by Bill's greeting, tossed his hair back with what the elder man perceived was probably a characteristic—and cultivated—gesture, and replied:

"I'm afraid Father might not have agreed with all the principles my studies and investigations impel me to advocate, these days." And he would, apparently, have gone on to make something in the nature of a brief speech if Bill had not interrupted:

"How do you know that? I knew him 'most as well as you did; maybe I knew him better, being nearly his age and all that. I always found him broad-minded and liberal. What makes you think he wouldn't be willing to listen to all sides of a proposition and then take a stand on the right side?"

"Why, I didn't intend to imply that he wouldn't. But in this great battle between the people and the privileged class—"

"He was people," Bill again broke in, "as good people as they make 'em. And you're his boy. By golly! I wish I was going to have the chance to introduce you to that crowd to-night. I'd tell 'em the kind of stock you come from."

Raber, of Chicago, who had been listening to Bill's enthusiasm with an expression that had shifted from frank hostility to shrewd curiosity, spoke two words:

"Why not?"

"But Cap'n Titus represents—" Hudston began, and then stopped. It came into his mind, as it had come into Raber's, that a complimentary introduction of the speaker of the evening by a man of Titus' standing might influence auditors who would not otherwise be moved by his eloquence. At the worst it would have a tendency to confuse those of the audience who were of unfriendly mind, and thus make the stampeding of the assemblage easier.

"Oh, of course I was only talking," Bill hastened to say. "I natchully don't expect you fellers to want me even on the platform. I s'pose I wouldn't fit. It only sort of come into my head—due to my thinking so much of your daddy, I reckon. . . . But there's a thing I wanted to tell you, and it's all right to say it before these friends of yours, I figure. I was talking to the Governor,—we're fairly good friends,—and we happened to speak of you, and I told him the son of your father ought to have—Well,"—Bill hesitated a second,—"there were some o' the conservative folks didn't want to have you given what you might call a free rein—thought you ought to be told to put on the soft pedal on your beliefs or something like that. And I said to the Governor that the son of your daddy, in the good ol' State of Texas, ought to have absolutely free speech."

Young Hudston's eyes were eager. "Would you be willing to tell that to the audience?"

"Tell it to anybody in the world; it aint any secret."

Raber nodded sharply to Hudston, who cried:

"You're the very man to introduce me, Cap'n Titus. Will you?"

Bill's face and voice advertised modesty. "Oh, I didn't really mean it. Some of these other friends of yours that understand your politics better than I do—"

"I would rather you did. I'm sincere about it. If you would tell them what you know about me, and what the Governor said, and ask them to give me an earnest hearing—Will you?"

Bill hesitated until both Hudston and Raber feared he was going to refuse. "Well," he finally decided, "I (Continued on page 144)



# Rupert Hughes' Novel of

## WHAT'S THE WORLD COMING TO?

The story so far:

**B**OB TAXTER came home from the war to the pleasant surprise of a ten-thousand-dollar legacy from an uncle. But he found that his cousin and sweetheart April Summerlin had inherited ten times as much from the same source; and he felt that he had no right to marry her till his financial status at least equaled hers. Slow methods wouldn't do for fiery Bob; and when a Texas soldier named Yarmy offered him a share in some marvelous oil-lands (and when Yarmy's sister Kate added her pretty and perilous persuasions), he determined to invest.

Yarmy sought also to interest the Summerlins; and with Bob Taxter and his sister Kate called upon them. But April was suspicious and tried also to dissuade Bob from turning over the five thousand-dollar bills he had brought with him, to Yarmy. After an argument Bob proposed to settle the question by the toss of a coin. Yarmy spun a half dollar in the air; it fell to the floor and rolled under the sofa. They stooped for it; Yarmy had won. But when Bob told him to take the bills which had been left on the table, he could not find them. . . . Bob's old negro servant, Zeb, had been operating a vacuum cleaner on the stair-landing above; only he and his machine knew where the money had gone.

### CHAPTER XXII

**N**OW you see it and now you don't! That is all very well as a watchword for a magician or a spiritualist, but in everyday affairs it is neither amusing nor satisfying. Five thousand real dollars in crisp thousand-dollar bills is no proper material for hocus-pocus or miracle.

In the year 1919 there was a peculiar mania for the most idealistic theorizing and for superstitious maunderings employing the logic of the African medicine-men. During the war many of the soldiers went back to the belief in charms and amulets, and to the jaunty fatalism and predestination of Mohammedan and Presbyterian tenets. As always, and as Lincoln said of our Civil War, both sides said prayers to the same God for victory over the ungodly enemy.

During and after the war, books and magazine articles in floods proclaimed marvels of communication with the dead, of the movement of heavy objects without contact, of thought-transference, of all sorts of new and old demonstrations that the moon is made of green cheese and the air is filled with busy ghosts. These books almost outnumbered all other forms of fiction.

Heavens, half-heavens, midway passages, transfer-stations—all sorts of places were mapped out by eye-witnesses dictating their travelers' tales to earth-bound amanuenses. Every story was specific, and the only bewildering thing about them was that no two accounts agreed in any important particular. In every case the absolute respectability of the witnesses was established beyond cavil. It was merely their affidavits that conflicted.

Never had so many poor souls been so horribly bereaved as by the unexampled slaughter of this war. This vast army of mourners fell prey to a vast army of tricksters of a peculiar and vulture loathsomeness, feeding on the hearts of the living, and vending conversations with the dead to distracted parents and lovers, giving vague glimpses of the dead in cabinets, receiving

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letters from them by pen, pencil or ouija, and always charging as much money as the traffic would bear. Like vultures, they fought with each other over their unresisting quarry. Intellectually the world had gone back *en masse* to the days of the witches and wizards.

The ouija board came into amazing power and threatened to drive the piano and the ukulele out of use. A lady in St. Louis wrote a number of poems under the unquestionable control of a seventeenth-century lady. These had such success that the dead lady wrote novels of other periods, one of them a vivid eye-witness picture of the times of Christ.

Other ladies in the Midwest brought Mark Twain back from the dead and made him write humorous works. This was a good joke on the immortal Mark, since his ouijacious books competed with his posthumous books, in which he fiercely combated the religious traditions of his country. It must be an inconvenience even in Paradise to learn that you may be yanked out of bliss and communion with the immortals at any moment by the command of any medium to whom any believer pays two dollars.

An improvement on the ouija board, which is at best a rather cumbersome form of typewriter, was the invention of automatic writing. Imitators of Mrs. Piper and her school sat at a table and held pen or pencil while people from the other world wrote descriptions, philosophical dissertations and moral treatises on conditions across the grave. They answered questions and in every instance gave absolute proof that fraud was inconceivable. Mr. Basil King published a volume of beautiful cable-matter written by a young girl who could not possibly have known what she was writing—he was sure of that. It is fine to find somebody who still thinks he knows all a young girl knows.

Yet there is a little cinder in the eye of all these visions; none of these miracles is ever allowed to influence everyday

# of To-day's Tempestuous Youth

Illustrated by

FRANK SNAPP



With an abrupt impatience and a pretty show of temper, Kate tore down the structure of her hair. "Do you happen to have a few hairpins?" Bob laughed with shivering jaws: "I don't use them."

existence or set up new standards. Evidence that establishes our whole eternal future is not permitted to sway us in the purchase of shoes or the trial of sneak-thieves. Real money and real life make a tremendous difference. There was never yet philosopher who could endure the toothache; and there was never yet occultist who could accept a miracle by which a substantial sum of his own money was whisked away.

Or so, at least, it was with the dematerializing of those five thousand dollars that Bob Taxter had laid on the table and Joe Yarmy had flipped a coin for. If a sleight-of-hand man had made them vanish in the full light, everybody would have laughed and said: "Mighty clever trick. I wonder how he did it." If an old lady had made them disappear in a dark cabinet, nearly everybody would have gasped and sighed: "Marvelous! Trickery is impossible. It proves that there are spirits and that this old lady has them working for her." Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Conan Doyle and Professor Hyslop and others would have filled the magazines and books with big words about it. It would have sufficed to disprove the law of gravity, and every other law.

But the disappearance of this money was really mystifying

because it was real money and because none of the wonderers had seen any human being in its neighborhood. Five people were in the same room, but they had all pursued the rolling half-dollar, leaving the five bank-notes in repose. It is excellent cabinet logic that if nobody has seen anybody do a thing, it must have been done by the dead. But this was real money, not a banjo or a tambourine!

Mrs. Summerlin's first thought was: "The place is haunted." April Summerlin's first thought was: "Was that Yarmy woman really over there with me? She's capable of anything!"

But even April's hostility could not mistake the sincerity in Kate Yarmy's horrified eyes. Bob Taxter, whose money it was, was simply chloroformed by the shock of the loss. He could not think at all, even occultly.

Joe Yarmy, however, always suspected everybody in advance, and would keep his eye on St. Peter and drop a little acid on the golden stairs of the New Jerusalem. Joe Yarmy, who did not even trust himself, wasted no time on mystic speculations. The one important fact was that he had won the money on the toss of a coin, and that while he chased the coin, the paper fled. The situation bored him insufferably.

Bob Taxter pressed his brow and stared at the place where the money had been and whispered:

"It's gone! My five thousand dollars! Just vanished!"

Joe Yarmy rolled a fish-eye at him and sneered: "Your five thousand? Where d'you get that 'your' stuff? It's my five thousand, and I want it."

Bob spoke vaguely: "Find it, and you can keep it." Joe snarled: "Agh! Cut it out and come across! I aint time for any handy-spandy jacky-dandy business."

Bob gasped: "You don't think I have it, do you?" "Well, somebody's got it! It was there, and it aint there. What you tryin' to put over? You tryin' to welch on me?"

A flame of wrath blazed in Bob's eyes; he seized Joe by the necktie with one hand throatlingly and held his fist at the ready, as he muttered:

"Do you think I've got it?"

Joe preferred his face and his breath to his argument. He weakened and gulped and whined: "You couldn't have took it. You was on your knees with me ova yonda, brotha!"

Bob let him go and sighed: "It's my loss. I don't get either oil-property or the money now."

"The oil-prop'ety is ready when the money is," Joe retorted. "I'm ready to sign the papers the minute I get the dough. Where's it at?"

"I wish I knew."

"Then you help me search these folks. Search everybody! You can begin on me."

April spoke up: "You can follow with me."

Kate put up her arms: "I insist on being cleared."

Mrs. Summerlin was terrified: "Great heavens. I wonder if it could have flown over to me." She turned over a pocket and began to feel about her skirts and step aside as if she might be standing on it.

Joe gave her a contemptuous laugh. Her panic was her alibi. But he was furious at the loss of the wealth. He growled at everybody in general and nobody in-particular.

"Say! Say! Say! Somebody's gona slip that cash to me quick, or I'm gona turn the bulls loose in here."



"The bulls!" Mrs. Summerlin fretted. "What are bulls?"  
"Agh!" Joe raged. "Thuh pullice, thuh pullice!"

Bob spoke ominously: "Don't worry, Mrs. Summerlin. Mr. Yarmy isn't going to call any police into your apartment."

"Oh, aint I?" Joe shouted.

Kate gave him a look like a jab with a knife. "No, you aint I! It would be well for you to rememba, Joe, that you're not in Texas."

Joe subsided. "Agh! Can't you take a joke? I'm not gona make any trouble. But I'm gona find that five. Let's search the place. Who knows but a draft of wind might have blew the bills off the table?"

He led in a frantic ransacking of every nook and cranny. Everybody joined him, and there was so much running about on hands and knees that a stranger who walked in would have wondered what childhood game was being played, that these bipeds grew quadrupedal. But the hunt found no trace of the quarry. Not a single one of the five bills was discovered.

When Joe, still on his hands and knees, turned from looking up the chimney and trying to keep out of the ashes on the hearth, the whir of the vacuum cleaner upstairs caught his ear.

He whirled on his knees, sat up on his haunches, listened, demanded:

"Who's makin' that noise?"

Bob answered: "That's my boy Zeb cleaning upstairs. He wouldn't steal from me."

Joe started up the steps: "Maybe he'd steal from me."

"But he hasn't been down here," Bob protested.

"It wont hurt to give him the once over," said Joe.

Bob did not fancy the thought of Joe's invading the upper regions of Mrs. Summerlin's home. He said: "Wait! I'll call him down. —Zeb! Oh, Zeb!"

## CHAPTER XXIII

THE murmur ceased. Zeb shuffled to the rail and looked over:

"You call me, Masta Bob?"

"Yes. Did you see—"

Joe broke in with ironic lilt: "'Come down, sweet evening star!'"

Zeb looked to Bob for orders and obeyed his nod. As he clumped down, followed by Pansy, Joe laughed and quoted the song: "'Some folks say a nigga wont steal.' There's two coons here. I reckon one of 'em's got the stuff."

When Zeb arrived, he stood blinking his eyes. Pansy took her post at his side, a little less advanced, like the adjutant of a black battalion.

Bob explained: "Zeb,—and Pansy,—I laid five thousand dollars in bills on this table a few minutes ago, and—well, it isn't here."

"It belonged to me," Joe put in, closing on Zeb as if he would scare it out of him. And if Zeb had had the money on him, he would have shivered it off as his wild eyes fastened on Joe's ferocious glare. With the manner of a policeman putting a suspect through the third degree, Joe roared:

"Come through, coon, and come through clean. We all know you stole that money; so cough!"

Zeb did not mean to be literal. His terror choked him, and he coughed. But he did not cough the money. He backed away from Joe's hands to ask:

"You say that money was down year?"

"Yes. You know it was."

"Did I? Well, then, did anybody see me down year?"

"No, but—"

"Well, how's me gwine took it? Does you-all think I'm a jyraffe?"

Joe persisted. "Well, somebody took it, and I'm goin' through you, coon."

Zeb edged away again. Joe laughed triumphantly.

"See, you're afraid to be frisked."

Zeb answered with much dignity: "I aint afraid of nothin', but I don't allow no Nawthe'n gemman to call me no coon."

Joe laughed. "Me Nawthe'n! I come from Texas, where we don't take no nonsense from nigs."

Bob intervened to protect his own. "You didn't take it, did you, Zeb?"

With an honesty that could not be doubted, Zeb raised his right hand and solemnly affirmed:

"Masta Bob, I swa' to the Lawd I aint nevva laid hands on ary money this day 'cept that fifty you gin me."

"I believe you, Zeb," said Bob, "but Mr. Yarmy may not. I want you to let him search you."

Zeb held up both hands now in the attitude of surrender: "Whatevva is yo' desiah, is mine, Masta Bob. Mistoo Yahmy can go thoo me wit' a telescope or a X-ray, ef he wants to."

JOE jammed his fingers into various pockets and prodded and buffeted him here and there. Nothing was more convincing than Zeb's helpless giggles as he protested:

"Be keerful, Mistoo Man, you're nachelly ticklin' me to death."

Yarmy flung on the table every object he found.

The entire loot of the raid was an old pipe, a pouch of tobacco, a few coins, a few business cards, a comb, a key or two, a small monkey-wrench, a nub of lead-pencil, a handkerchief and Bob's fifty-dollar bill. Yarmy was bitterly disappointed, but Bob felt a glow of affection for his new servant who had come past the ordeal so perfectly. Pansy stood watching the search, and her welling anger showed how much dearer Zeb's dignity was to her than she would have admitted.

Joe looked at her next. She narrowed her eyes, arched her back, tightened her claws and drew back her lips like an old cat about to spit. She answered before he spoke: "I'm a 'spectable woman, young man, and I don't 'low no familiarities. I aint saw yo' money any mo' than what Zeb has. Him and I been upstairs evva sence I let you in."

Pansy, like many a more eminent witness at a séance, had solemnly testified to more than she really knew. She had forgotten that she had left Zeb alone for several minutes and had not known what he did or where he went.

Her absolute certainty broke down Joe's last theory. He tossed his hands and gave up with a last command:

"Go on back to your roost."

Zeb paused to ask: "Huccum you-all lef' so much wealth layin' out year?"

Bob explained sheepishly:

"We tossed a half-dollar to see whether or not I'd invest in Mr. Yarmy's oil-wells, and the coin rolled under the divan, and we all went after it."

Zeb could not forbear a bit of venerable reproof.

"Kind o' funny to resk five thousand dolla's on one half-dolla', aint it? Looks to me like a sign you aint wanted to put that money in them oil-wells."

Bob winced at this undeniable wisdom from this source. He motioned Zeb to the stairs. Zeb mounted part way and turned to ask:

"Whose half-dolla' was it?"

"What difference does that make?" Bob answered, still more impatiently.

"Was it yours, Masta Bob?" Zeb persisted.

Bob shook his head angrily. Zeb gazed at Mr. Yarmy and said very respectfully:

"Would you min' leavin' me look at that half-dolla', Mistoo Yarmy?"

Joe darted angrily toward the stairway. "What you gettin' at, nigger?" Bob checked him and ordered Zeb to go on upstairs. The old man obeyed his master's nod.

Joe turned to Bob and said:

"Well, Mr. Taxter, I reckon that money's gone now, for sure. It's bound to turn up somewhere, but I can't wait. You got another five thousand in the bank. You give me a check for that or come and draw out the cash. I'll give you a receipt, and then you can keep the lost money when you find it."

Zeb leaned out over the balcony rail to hear this, and April felt a new alarm. But Bob had invested heavily enough for one



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Joe led in a frantic ransacking of every nook and cranny. A stranger who walked in would have wondered what childhood game was being played, that these bipeds became quadrupedal.

day. He had lost his taste for the speculation. He shook his head.

"No, Mr. Yarmy, I reckon you'd better count me out. I wont decide what to do with the balance till I find what happened to this money. I'm sorry you've had all this trouble, but you wont be out anything, for you have another man waiting to buy in with you."

Joe shifted from foot to foot, exchanged a glance or two with Kate and nodded his head like the good sport he was.

"All right, brotha. If you should find the money in the next houah or tew, you got my telephone numba."

He and Kate shook hands all round and took their departure. Since that was all they took, April was able to be almost polite to Kate as she bade her good-by; but she did not ask her to call again.

When the door closed on the Yarmys, Bob fell into a chair. April and her mother dropped to the displaced divan. No one spoke till Zeb's voice came down from aloft:

"I wisht you'd 'a' made him show that half-dolla', Masta Bob."

Bob looked up in anger at the annoyance and grumbled: "Get back to your work."

Zeb answered: "Yessa! But you know, Masta Bob, they is money made that has both sides the same."

Bob was indignant. The implication of credulity was intolerable, coming from a stupid old negro. He answered with some petulance.

"Well, even if it was a phony coin, he didn't make anything out of it."

"No," Zeb chuckled, "de Lawd is mo' powersome than some crooks."

Bob was thinking of Zeb's impudent and obstinate suspicion rather than of his piety when he muttered: "You've been in New York too long."

Zeb shouted at this: "You said it, Masta Bob. I's raidy to go back to ol' V'ginia the moment you says the word."

"We're not going back to Virginia," said Bob, "and if you don't finish your work up there, you can give me back that fifty and go back to being your own boss."

Zeb's answer to this was a mellifluous wheedle: "You aint give me our new address, Masta Bob."

Bob laughed, told him the number and name of his apartment-house, and then looked at his watch.

"Speaking of Virginia," he said, "my mother is on her way from there, and I've got to meet the 1:06 train."

Mrs. Summerlin gave him messages of love and welcome for her old friend, and April seconded them. She had often thought of Mrs. Taxter as her future mother-in-law, and had thought well of her in that delicate post. Yet now that she had seen Miss Yarmy, her rival, driven from the field, she felt that her victory had brought her no nearer to Bob.

Bob lifted himself from the chair. He felt tons heavier, relieved of the burden of half of his money, for half of his wings of dream were gone from his shoulders. If April had been far away when he had ten thousand dollars, she had removed to a further infinity now that he was reduced to five. He had not even had the pleasure of squandering it. He had not had a run for his money. Between the mystery and the fact of its evaporation, he was too befuddled to think of love or marriage. He was very tired, and his farewell was only a sigh, a sickly smile and a rather feeble handclasp.

When he had gone, April and her mother turned once more to a minute search for the money. They called Pansy and Zeb down to help in the search, and no one was more fertile in suggestions or more zealous in moving heavy objects about than Zeb.

He did not have to mimic gloom. He knew where the money was, but he did not know what to do with it. To return it now and confess the incredible audacity of its theft was to invite one or both of two disasters: an instant, a permanent exile from Bob's favor, or the prompt delivery of the money to the unbearable Yarmys. He was so frantic with his dilemma that he was glad of an excuse to run about in a futile paper-chase.

#### CHAPTER XXIV

**F**ATIGUE alone put an end to the rummage. Mrs. Summerlin sent Pansy to get luncheon ready and Zeb to finish his work upstairs; then she dropped into a chair opposite the exhausted April. Their legs and arms had struck, but their eyes kept working and kept raising new hopes that lifted the weary bodies.

When even their eyes had tired of patrolling the room, their minds continued to scrutinize theories. Mrs. Summerlin recurred to the possibility of ghosts. They make a convenient explanation of strange sounds at night and of odd optical illusions, but few people really believe in them, since the one test of genuine belief is practice. A creed to which we pay only lip-service is only a blind.

Many learned volumes and tons of psychical research reports have been devoted to the noisy and mischievous species of imp called the *Polytergeist*, but his playground is the dark and lonely room where he can throw sticks about, break crockery and otherwise amuse himself according to his peculiarly infantile, not to say imbecile tastes. He is not the sort of fibbertigibbet that would flow through a keyhole and carry off five thousand-dollar bills, especially as the bills, not being spiritualized, would have undoubtedly attracted attention as the invisible fairy carried them visibly across the room.

There are instances of wrecked railroad-trains, dead men's clothes, clanking chains, armor, shoes, stock- (Continued on page 131)



"Come through, coon: We all know you stole that money; so cough!" Joe roared.



# IN HIS OWN BLOOD

A story that will take you back to your kidhood if you were not one of those city-born youngsters.

By  
DON MARQUIS

Illustrated by ARTHUR G. DOVE

NEVER did I suppose that I would be a bloodhound in an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" show. But I have been one, and my constant wish is that it has not made me too proud and haughty. For proud and haughty dogs, sooner or later, all have their downfalls. The dog that was the rightful bloodhound in that show was the proudest and haughtiest dog I ever met, and he had his downfall.

Other proud and haughty dogs I have seen, in my time; and some of them I have licked, and some of them have licked me. For instance, there was the one that used to be a blind man's dog on a street-corner in Chicago. He was a tough, loud-barking, red-eyed dog, full of suspiciousness and fleas; and his disposition was so bad that it was even said that if one of his fleas bit an ordinary dog, that ordinary dog would swell up where he was bitten as if a hornet had stung him. He was proud of those fleas and proud of being that ornery; but he had his downfall.

Another proud and haughty dog I knew belonged to the dog and pony part of a circus that came to our town once. He sat in a little cart in the street-parade, with a clown's hat and jacket on, and drove a Shetland pony. You couldn't get him into a fight; he would just grin and say he was worth too much money to risk himself in a fight, especially as the money he was worth did not belong to him anyhow, but to the circus that owned him. He said it wouldn't be honest to risk other people's money just because he wanted to fight; but I have never believed that he

really wanted to fight. He grinned most all the time, a conceited kind of grin, and he would upend himself and stand on his head for you to admire him, and then flop over and bark and look proud of his own tricks and proud of the money he was worth. But he had his downfall right in the midst of his greatest pride, for a

brindle Tom-cat with one eye went after him right in the middle of that street-parade, and he left that cart very quickly, and it nearly broke up the parade.

But the proudest and haughtiest of all was the bloodhound that owned that Uncle Tom show—leastways, he acted as if he owned it. It was a show that showed in a tent, like a regular circus, and it stayed in our town three days. It had a street-parade too; and this bloodhound was led along at the head of the street-parade with a big heavy muzzle on, and he was loaded down with chains and shackles so he could hardly walk. Besides the fellow that led him, there were two more men that followed along behind him and held onto chains that were fastened to his collar. In front of him marched the *Uncle Tom* of that show; and every now and then the bloodhound would struggle to get at *Uncle Tom* and be pulled back. He was a very dangerous-looking dog, and you thought to yourself what a lot of damage he would probably do if he was ever to bite those chains to pieces and eat up those three men that held him and chew *Uncle Tom* and then run loose into the world. Every step he took he would toss his head and jangle those chains and growl.



After the parade was over, a lot of us dogs and boys went down to the lot where the show was to be held. We were hanging around the tent where the actors were eating, and that bloodhound dog was there without chains like any other dog, and us dogs got to talking with him.

"You country-town dogs," he says to Mutt Mulligan, who is a friend of mine and some considerable dog himself, "don't want to come fussin' around too close to my cook-tent or my show! us troupers aint got any too much use for you hick dogs, anyhow."

"Oh, it's *your* show, is it?" says Mutt.

"Whose show did you think it was?" says that bloodhound dog, very haughty.

"I thought from all those chains and things, maybe the show owned you, instead of you owning the show," says Mutt.

"You saw who led that street-parade, didn't you?" says the bloodhound dog. "Well, that ought to tell you who the chief actor of this show is. This here show is built up around me. If anything was to happen to me, there couldn't be any show."

Mutt, he gave me a signal with his tail to edge in a little closer, and I sidled up to where I could grab a front leg unexpected to him, if he made a pass at Mutt. And then Mutt says, sneering so his teeth stuck out and his nose wrinkled:

"Something's goin' to happen to you, if you aint more polite and peaceable in your talk."

"What's goin' to happen to me?" says that bloodhound dog.

"Don't you let them bristles rise around your neck," says Mutt, "or you'll find out what's goin' to happen to you."

"Whose bristles are they?" says that bloodhound dog.

"It don't make any difference whose bristles they are," says Mutt. "No dog can stick his bristles up into my face like that and get away with it. When I see bristles stand up, I take it personal."

But just then old Uncle Zeb White, who is colored, come a-moseyin' along, and that Tom show dog barked out:

"Somebody hold me! Quick! Somebody muzzle me! Somebody better put my chains onto me again! Somebody better tell that colored man to clear out of here! I've been trained to chase colored men! What do they mean by letting that colored man get near my show-tent?"

Old Uncle Zeb, he is the quietest and most peaceable person anywhere, amongst dogs, boys or humans, and the janitor of the Baptist church. He is the only colored man in our town, and is naturally looked up to and respected with a good deal of admiration and curiosity on that account, and also because he is two hundred years old. He used to be the bodyservant of General George Washington, he says, until General Washington set him free. And then along comes Abraham Lincoln after a while and sets him free again, he says. And being set free by two prominent men like that, Uncle Zeb figures he is freer than anybody else, and I have heard him tell time and again how he can't speak kindly enough of them two white gentlemen.

"Don't anybody sick me onto that colored man," says this bloodhound dog. "If I was to be sicked onto that colored man, this whole town couldn't pull me off again! I been trained to it, I tell you!"

Which it was easy enough to see he really didn't want to start anything; it was just his pride and haughtiness working in him. Just then Freckles Watson, who is my boy that I own, and Tom Mulligan, who is Mutt Mulligan's boy, both says: "Sick 'im!"

Not that they understood what us dogs was talking about, but they saw me and Mutt sidling around that Tom-show dog, and it looked to them like a fight could be commenced. But the Tom-show dog, when he heard that "Sick 'im!" jumped and caught Uncle Zeb by a leg of his trousers. Then Uncle Zeb's own dog, which his name is Burning Deck after a piece Uncle Zeb heard recited one time, comes a-bulging and a-bouncing through the crowd and grabs that Tom-show dog by the neck.

They rolled over and over, and into the eating-tent, and under the table. The actors jumped up, and the table got tipped over, and the whole meal and the tin dishes they was eating off of, and all the actors and the benches and the dogs was wallowing and banging and kicking and barking and shouting on the ground in a mess, and all of us other dogs run in to help Burning Deck lick that bloodhound, and all the boys followed their dogs in to see a square deal, and then that tent come down on top of everything, and believe me it was some enjoyable time. And I found quite a sizable piece of meat under there in the mix-up, and I

thinks to myself I better eat that while I can get it, so I crawled out with it. Outside is sitting Uncle Zeb, watching that fallen-down tent heaving and twisting and squirming, and I heard him say to himself:

"White folks is allers gittin' up some kin' of entuhtainment fo' us cullud people to look at! Us cullud people suah does git treated fine in dese heah No'the'n towns!"

Pretty soon everybody comes crawling out from under that tent, and they straightens her up, and the boss of the show begins to talk like Uncle Zeb has done the whole

thing, and Uncle Zeb just sits on the grass and smiles and scratches his head. And finally the boss of the show says to Uncle Zeb could he hire Burning Deck for the bloodhound's part? Because Burning Deck has just about chewed that proud and haughty dog to pieces, and they've got to have a bloodhound!

"No suh," says Uncle Zeb. "No suh! I thank yo' kindly fo' yo' offer, suh, but Burnin' Deck, he aint gwine inter no show whah he likely ter be sicked onter no cullud pusson. Burnin' Deck, he allers been a good Republican, bringed up that-a-way, des de same as me, an' we aint gwine ter take no paht in any gwines-on ag'in' de cullud nation."

"But see here," says the boss. "In this show the colored people get all the best of it. In this show all the colored people go to heaven!"

Uncle Zeb says he had heard a good deal about that Uncle Tom show in his life, first and last, and because he had heard so much, he went to see it one time. And he says if getting chased by bloodhounds and whipped by whips is giving them the best of it, he hopes he never obtains admission to any show where they get the worst of it. The boss, he says that show is the show that helped set the colored people free, and Uncle Zeb ought to be proud of Burning Deck acting in it. But Uncle Zeb says he aint to be fooled; it was General Washington set 'em free first, and Abraham Lincoln set 'em free the second time, and now President Wilson is licking them Germans and setting them free again. And as for him, he says, he will stick to his own white folks that he knows and janitors for and whose clothes fit him, and Burning Deck will do the same. And as far as them Tom-show colored folks' going to heaven is concerned, he reckons he don't want to be chased there by no bloodhounds; and it aint likely that a man that has janitored for a Baptist church as faithful as he has would go anywhere else, anyhow. So he takes Burning Deck and goes along home.

"I've got to have a dog," says the boss, watching them get the tent fixed up, and rubbing his head.

"Would Spot do?" says Freckles, which is my boy—Spot being me.

Well, I never expected to be an actor, as I said before. But they struck a bargain, which Freckles was to get free admission



Somebody dropped the curtain down right into the midst of it. Outside of the curtain was left Freckles and me and Little Eva.

to that show, and I was to be painted and dyed up some and be a bloodhound. Which the boss said the regular bloodhound which Burning Deck had eat so much of wasn't really a bloodhound, anyhow, but only a big mongrel with bloodhound notions in his head.

Well, maybe you've seen that show—which all the bloodhound has to do is to run across the stage chasing that *Uncle Tom*, and Freckles was to run across with me, so there wasn't much chance to go wrong.

And nothing would have gone wrong if it hadn't been for Burning Deck. Uncle Zeb White must have got over his grouch against that show, for there he was sitting in the front row with a new red handkerchief around his throat and his plug hat on his knees, and Burning Deck was there with him. I never had anything but liking for Uncle Zeb, for he knows where to scratch dogs. But Burning Deck and me have never been close friends, on account of him being jealous when Uncle Zeb scratches you too long. He even is jealous when Uncle Zeb scratches a pig, which all the pigs in town that can get loose have a habit of coming to Uncle Zeb's cottage to be scratched, and they say around town that some of those pigs never find their way home again. Squeals have been heard coming from Uncle Zeb's kitchen, but the rest of the pigs never seem to learn.

But no self-respecting dog would be jealous if his boss scratched a pig. For after all, what is a pig? It is just a pig, and that is all you can say for it. A pig is not a person; a pig is something to eat. But Burning Deck is a peculiar dog, and he gets ideas into his head. And so, right in the midst of that show, when I chased that colored man across the stage, Burning Deck all of a sudden jumped up onto the platform and grabbed me. I would have licked him then and there, but what was left of the show's bloodhound come crawling out onto the stage dragging two of his legs, and Burning Deck turned from me to him, and then all the actors run onto the stage to save what was left of the bloodhound, and Ike Salters, the city marshal, threw open his coat so you could see his big star and climbed onto the stage and arrested everybody, and somebody dropped the curtain down right into the midst of it.

And the way it happened, on the outside of the curtain was left Freckles and me and the *Little Eva* of that show, which she is beautiful, with long yellow hair and pink cheeks and white clothes like an angel. And before Freckles could stop her, she took hold of him by the hand and says to the audience wont they please be kind to the poor traveling troupers and not let them be under arrest, and let the show go on? And she cried considerable, and all through her crying you could hear Ike Salters behind the curtain arresting people; and after a while some of the women in the audience got to crying too, and the city fathers was all in the audience, and they went up onto the stage and told Ike, for the sake of *Little Eva*, to release everyone he had arrested and after that the show went on.

Well, after the show was out, quite a lot of the dogs and boys that was friends of mine and of Freckles was waiting for us. Being in a show like that made us heroes. But some of them were considerably jealous of us too, and there would have been some fights, but Freckles says kind of dignified that he does not care to fight until his show is out of town, but after that he will take on any and all who dare—that is, he says, if he doesn't decide to go with that show, which the show is crazy to have him do. And me and him and Stevie Stevenson, which is his particular chum, goes off and sets down on the schoolhouse steps, and Stevie tells him what a good actor he was, running across the stage with me after that *Uncle Tom*. But Freckles, he is sad and solemn, and he only fetches a sigh.

"What's eatin' you, Freckles?" Stevie asks him. Freckles, he sighs a couple of times more, and then he says:

"Stevie, I'm in love."

"Gosh, Freckles!" says Stevie. "Honest?"

"Honest Injun," says Freckles.

"Do you know who with?" says Stevie.

"Uh-huh!" says Freckles. "If you didn't know who with, how would you know you was?"

But Stevie, he says you might be and not know who with, easy enough. Once, he says, he was like that. He says he was feeling kind of queer for a couple of weeks last spring, and they dosed him and dosed him, with sassafras and worm-medicine and roots and herbs, and none of it did any good. His mother says it is growing-pains, and his father says it is laziness. And he thinks himself maybe it is because he is learning to chew and smoke tobacco on the sly and keeps swallowing a good deal of it right along. But one day he hears his older sister and another big girl talking when they don't know he is around, and they are in love, both of them, and from what he can make out, their feelings is just like his. And it comes to him all of a sudden he must be in love himself, and it was days and days before he found out who it was that he was in love with.

"Who was it?" asks Freckles.

"It turned out to be Mable Jones," says Stevie, "and I was scared plumb to death for a week or two that she would find out about it. I used to put toads down her back and stick burrs into her hair so she wouldn't never guess it."

Stevie says he went through days and days of it, and for a while he was scared that it might last forever, and he don't ever want to be in love again. Suppose it should be found out on a fellow that he was in love?

"Stevie," says Freckles, "this is different."

Stevie asks him how he means.

"I want her to know," says Freckles.

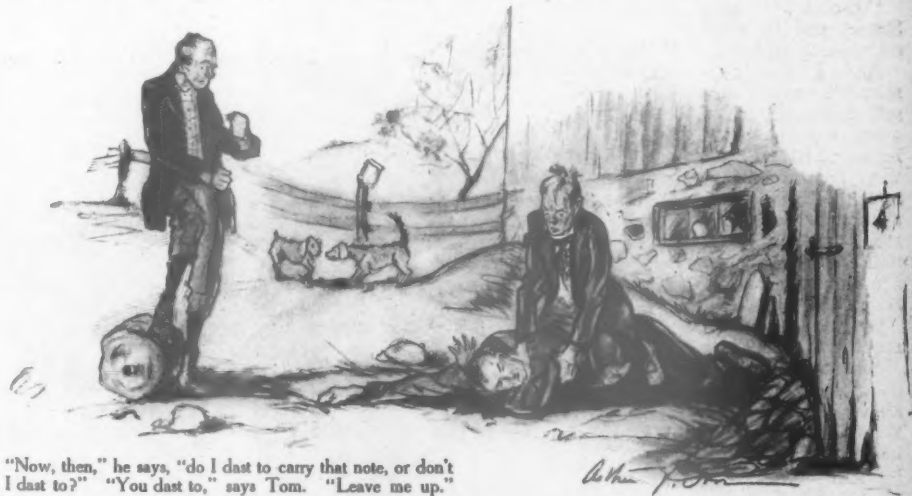
"Great Scott!" says Stevie. "No!"

"Uh-huh!"

"It don't show on you, Freckles," says Stevie.

Freckles says of course it don't show. Only first love shows, he says. Once before he was in love, he says, and that showed on him. That was last spring, and he was only a kid then, and didn't know how to hide it. But this time he can hide it, because this time he feels that it is different. He swallows down the signs of it, he says, the way you keep swallowing down the signs of it when you have something terrible like heart-disease or stomach-trouble, and nobody will know it till after he's dead.

And when he is dead, Freckles says, they will all wonder what



"Now, then," he says, "do I dast to carry that note, or don't I dast to?" "You dast to," says Tom. "Leave me up."

he died of, and maybe he will leave a note, wrote in his own blood, to tell. And they will all come in Injun file and pass through the parlor, he says, where his casket will be set onto four chairs, and She will come filing by and look at him, and she will say not to bury him yet, for there is a note held tight in his hand.

And everybody will say: "A note? A note? Who can it be to?"

And She will say to pardon her for taking the liberty at a time like this, but She has saw her own name onto that note. And then, Freckles says, She will open it and read it out loud right there in the parlor to all of them, and they will all say how the departed must have liked her to draw up a note to her wrote in his own blood like that.

And then, Freckles says, She will say, yes, he must have liked her, and that she liked him an awful lot, too, but She never knew he liked her, and She wished now she had of known he liked her an awful lot, because to write a note in his own blood like that showed that he liked her an awful lot, and if he only was alive now she would show she liked him an awful lot and would kiss him to show it. And she would not be scared to kiss him in front of all those people standing around the sides of the parlor, dead or alive. And then she would kiss him, Freckles says. And maybe, Freckles says, he wouldn't be dead after all, but only just lying there like the boy that traveled around with the hypnotizer who was put in a store window and laid there all the time the hypnotizer was in town with everybody making bets whether they could see him breathing or not. And then, Freckles says, he would get up out of his casket, and his Sunday suit with long pants would be on, and he would take the note and say: "Yes, it is to you, and I wrote it with my own blood!"

And when She handed him the note, Freckles says, he would tell the people in the parlor: "Little Eva and I forgive you all!" "Little Eva!" says Stevie. "Gosh all fishbooks, Freckles, it aint the girl in the show, is it?"

"Uh-huh!" says Freckles, kind of sad and proud.

"Freckles," says Stevie, after they had both set there and thought, saying nothing, for a while, "I got just one more question to ask you: Are you figuring you will get married? Is it as bad as that?"

"Uh-huh!" says Freckles.

Stevie, he thought for another while, and then he got up and put his hand onto Freckles' shoulder.

"Freckles, old scout," he says, "good-by. I'm awful sorry for you, but I can't chase around with you any more. I can't be seen running with you. I wont tell this on you, but if it was ever to come out, I wouldn't want to be too thick with you. You know what the gang would do to you, Freck, if they ever got onto this. I wont blab, but I can't take no risks about chumming with you."

And he went away and left Freckles and me sitting there. But in a minute he came back and said:

"Freckles, you know that iron sling-shot crotch of mine? You always used to be stuck on that sling-shot crotch, Freckles, and I never would trade it to you. Well, Freckles, you can have that darned old iron sling-shot crotch free for nothing!"

"Stevie," answers Freckles, "I don't want it any longer."

"Gosh!" says Stevie, and he went off, shaking his head.

And I was considerable worried myself. I tagged Freckles along home, and he wasn't natural. He went into the house, and I tagged him along in and up to his room, and he took no notice of me, though I'm not supposed to be there at all.

And what do you suppose that kid did? He went and washed his ears. It was midnight, and there wasn't anyone to make him do it, and there wasn't anyone to see his ears but me, but he washed 'em careful, inside and out. And then he wet his hair and combed it. First he parted it on one side, and then he parted it on the other, and then he blushed and parted it in the middle. I was sitting on the floor by the foot of the bed, and he was facing the looking-glass, but I saw the blush because it spread clear around to the back of his neck.

And then he went to the closet and put on his long pants that belonged to his Sunday suit. The looking-glass wasn't big enough so he could see his ears and his hair and his long pants all at the same time, but he tilted the glass and squirmed and twisted around

and saw them bit by bit. At first I thought maybe he was going out again, even at that time of night, but he wasn't; all he was doing was admiring himself. Just then his father pounded on the wall and asked him if he wasn't in bed yet, and he said he was going. He put the light out right away. But he didn't go to bed. He just sat in the dark with his clean ears and his long pants on and his hair parted in the middle, and several times before I went to sleep myself I heard him sigh and say: "Little Eva! Little Eva's dying! Little Eva!"

He must have got so tired he forgot to undress, staying up that late and everything, for in the morning when his father pounded on the door he didn't answer. I was under the bed, and I stayed there. Pretty soon his father pounded again, and then he came into the room. And there Freckles was lying on the bed with his Sunday pants on and his hair parted in the middle and his ears clean.

"Harold!" says his father, and shook him. "What does this mean?"

Harold is Freckles' other name, but if anyone of his size calls him Harold, there will be a fight. He sat up on the bed and says, still sleepy:

"What does what mean, Pa?"

"Your lying there asleep with your clothes on," says his father.

"I was dressing, and I went to sleep again," says Freckles.

"Uh-huh!" says his father. "It looks like it, don't it?"

"Yes sir," says Freckles.

I had crawled out to the foot of the bed where I could see them, and he was still sleepy, but he was trying hard to think up something.

"It looks a lot like it," says his father. "If you had slept in that bed, the covers would have been turned down, wouldn't they?"

"Yes sir," says Freckles, looking at them.

"Well, what then?" says his father.

"Well, Pa," says Freckles, "I guess I must have made that bed up again in my sleep, and I never knew it."

"Humph!" says his father. "Do you do that often?"

"Yes sir," says Freckles, "—a good deal, lately."

"Harold," says his father, real interested, "aren't you feeling well these days?"

"No, Pa," says Freckles, "I aint felt so very well for quite a while."

"Humph!" says his Pa. "How does it come when you dressed yourself you put on your Sunday pants, and this only Tuesday?"

Harold says he guesses he did that in his sleep too, the same time he made the bed up.

His pa wants to know if that has ever happened to him before.

"Yes sir," says Freckles, "once I woke up in the moonlight right out on one of the top limbs of the big maple tree in the front yard, with my Sunday suit on."

"Humph!" says his father. "And was your hair parted in the middle that time too?"

Freckles, he blushes till you can hardly see his freckles, and feels of his hair. But he is so far in, now, that he can't get out.

"Yes sir, every time I get taken that way, so I go around in my sleep, Pa, I find my hair has been parted in the middle, the next morning," he says to his father.

"Uh-huh!" says his pa. "Let's see your ears." And he pinched one of them while he was looking at it, and Freckles wriggles and says ouch.

"I thought so," says his pa, but didn't say what he thought right away. Then pretty soon he says: "Those ears have been washed more recently than that neck has." (Continued on page 101)

Freckles gulps and says:  
"A letter for Miss Little  
Eva."

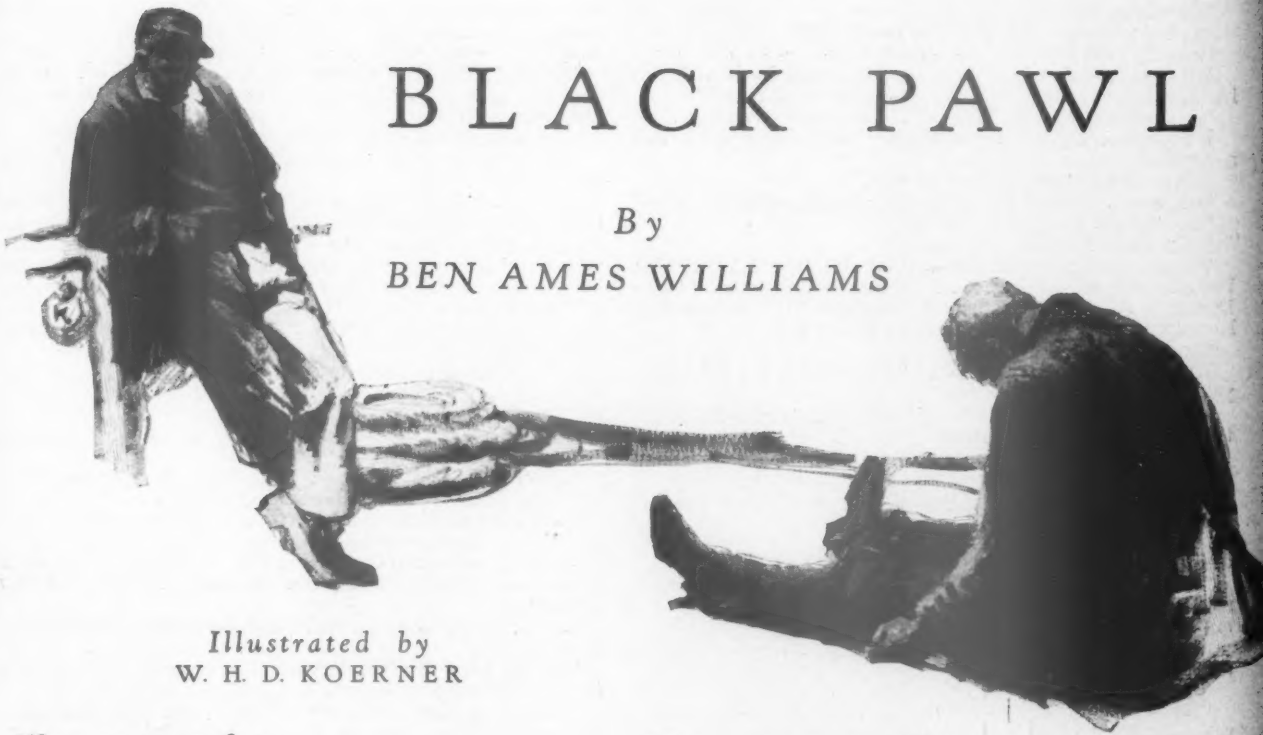




# BLACK PAWL

By

BEN AMES WILLIAMS



Illustrated by  
W. H. D. KOERNER

## The story so far:

THE whaler *Deborah Hoar* was about to weigh anchor from the South Sea Island harbor where she had stopped for fresh water when a native canoe brought aboard a missionary named Samuel Poor and his ward Ruth Lytton. They asked of Black Pawl, the skipper, passage to America. The hard-bitten old whaling-captain started when he saw Ruth—she reminded him, he said, of some one he had known. He accepted the two as passengers, and the *Deborah* set sail for America.

The cruise was marred by constant friction between the rough, sardonically humorous Black Pawl and his sullen son Red Pawl, the first mate. And while Ruth liked Black Pawl, liked the second mate Dan Darrin, liked the harpooners, even, she found Red Pawl a hard man to like on any count. Samuel Poor too, somehow liked Black Pawl, even though the old sea-dog openly scoffed at his religion. The two so-different men became friends of a sort, and one night Black Pawl told Poor something that explained many things. His wife, he said, had run away with another man while he was away at sea with their son—had run away and taken her little girl with her. Later he heard she had been deserted by the man, had been kidnaped by other men, had died. Black Pawl and his son had once come upon one of these other men and had killed him. . . . Black Pawl no longer believed in a deity.

One day far out at sea Black Pawl found Ruth struggling in the arms of his son. The father rescued her; and a terrific fight with Red followed, in which Black Pawl was finally victor. After that, however, Red Pawl continually encouraged Spiess—a stupid oaf of a sailor who hated Black Pawl for his rough discipline—in his threats of murderous revenge; and the tension aboard the *Deborah Hoar* increased.

Then came the hurricane, a furious storm from which Black Pawl saved his ship only by his masterful seamanship and dogged endurance. He had kept himself up, however, by heavy drinking, and when the strain was over sought to soothe his worn-out nerves by recourse to the same means. It was partly, perhaps, because of this that he came to look upon Ruth with desirous eyes: she had always attracted him somehow, had attracted him mysteriously.

The ship put in at an island harbor to repair the damage wrought by the storm. While Red Pawl and Dan Darrin and most of the men were ashore, Black Pawl went below and knocked on the door of Ruth's stateroom. "I'm coming in," he called through the door to her.

## The story proceeds:

### CHAPTER XII

BLACK PAWL had knocked at Ruth's door while she was preparing to put up her hair. It was about her shoulders now. He thought, abruptly, that with her hair thus, she looked very young, like a child—a child to be protected. It took the purpose out of him, to see her thus. He found himself thinking that his own daughter might have been like this, if she had lived; like this, with flowing hair, and sweetly curving lips, and the brave, calm eyes of a child.

She paid no heed to his words; she came out into the main cabin, braiding her hair and throwing it over her shoulder, out of the way. "Oh," she said, "I thought you were asleep. You must come back and go to sleep. You will be sick, truly."

"I was asleep," he replied. "I woke up. I can't sleep."

"I shouldn't have left you," she reproved herself. "But I didn't think you would wake up. Come, I'll put you to sleep again, and stay with you."

"I don't want to go to sleep."

She smiled at him. "You don't know *what* you want. You're deadly tired, and sick. Come."

Her hair was in a thick braid now, down her back. She looked more like a little child than ever; and he had a desire, almost overpowering, to yield, to go back, and sleep at her bidding. He fought it off, repeating stubbornly: "No, I don't want to sleep."

There were chairs by the cabin table, and she sat down in one of them and looked up at him and laughed. "What do you want, then? Do you know?"

He sat down, the table between them, and looked at her with his hot and aching eyes. He was dizzy and trembling with weakness. "How old are you?" he asked.

"Past twenty," she told him. His child, his daughter, would have been that age.

"Why?"

"With your hair like that, you look like a little girl," he said thickly.

She nodded. "That's all I am. I don't feel grown up, at all—except with Dan. Then I feel old enough to be his mother."

"Dan," he repeated under his breath, and she said softly: "Yes, Dan Darrin."

His head swayed a little, back and forth, lowering at her. "Him you think you—love?"

"Him I do love."

"How do you know so surely?"

"Oh—I know."

"But if you're a child, how can you know?"

"I know," she repeated. "I—just know."

His eyes lowered to the table, and he thought, heavily. When he looked at her again, he asked: "Ever know many men?"

"Not many white men," she said, "except—the missionary."

Black Pawl laughed unpleasantly. "He's not a man; he's a woman."

"He's the finest and bravest of men."

"Oh, aye," said the Captain. "He's a man, after his kind."

"And I love him," she declared.

"Him too?" Black Pawl mocked.

There was an implication in his tone that colored her cheeks; but she said nothing. Black Pawl leaned toward her. "Dan Darrin is all right," he said deprecatingly. "But—he's a boy. He's not a man grown, yet. You'd do best to pick a man."

"Dan's a man," she cried.

He shook his head stubbornly. "A good boy; but not a man yet. He needs ripening."

She said thoughtfully: "Don't you think it's natural for people to—like people of their own age?"

"Blind children, may be. But not those who are wise. You're not overwise to throw yourself to Dan so swiftly."

She smiled at him gayly. "I'm not throwing myself at him," she said. "You're not—considerate, to accuse me of that."

"I said 'to' him, not 'at' him," he reminded her.

"Throwing myself away?" she laughed.

"Aye."

"I'll — risk that with Dan." She leaned toward him.

"Please!" she said.

"You know Dan is fine and good and strong. Don't try to make me unhappy—because you can't."

His eyes burned her; he struck his fist upon the table. "I'm as much a man as Dan."

She hesitated, watching him; and then she said, soberly: "Yes, you are."

Her eyes were troubled.

"I tell you," he exclaimed in a swift, harsh voice, "I tell you I'm as much a man as he! And I—"

He was shaken by an abrupt confusion. "By the eternal, there's something in you that draws me, Ruth. There's something in you that cries out to me."

She did not speak; and he asked, in a tone that was half entreaty: "Have you not felt this at all?"

She told him frankly: "Yes; I like and admire you immensely, Cap'n Pawl."

He struck the table again. "I said it. Then why must you talk of this love that you say you have for Dan Darrin?"

"I love Dan; I but like you," she told him.

He flung up his hand. "Words, words! I tell you, there's something between us, you and me, more than liking. I'm not a man to be liked. Harsh, and cold, and rough with my men,

God-denying, without scruple, called 'Black Pawl' for the sake of the deeds I have done. You'd not be 'liking' such a man. It's more than 'liking,' Ruth. I tell you, there's more."

She shook her head slowly. "You are—all that which you say," she agreed. "And yet—there's good in the heart of you. I like that good in you."

"I'm black to my soul," he boasted. She laughed softly.

"No man's that," she told him. "No man's that; and you least of all."

He sat back in his chair, hands palm down on the table before him, and stared at his bony fingers. And at last he flung up his head and leveled his eyes on her. "Have it so," he agreed.

"Have it so, on your side. But on mine, this is no matter of liking. There's a deeper bond. I—"

He leaned toward her, his face working. "Ruth, I don't know what it is," he cried appealingly. "But it's there; it's there. I'm drawn to you, pulled to you. It's there, I say."

She met his eyes, and answered: "I'm—drawn to you too, Cap'n Pawl. There is—affection in me for you. I would do a great deal to help you."

"Ah, you love me," he cried, leaning toward her. But she shook her head.

"No, I love Dan Darrin—in that way. It may be that I love you in another—as a brother, or a father—"

Black Pawl laughed angrily. "You'll be a sister to me! Fiddle and all! I want no sisters. And—even though to you I may seem old enough for fathering, I'm not. I tell you I'm as much a boy as Dan Darrin, where you're concerned. Father! Brother! Fiddling talk!"

"Friends, then," she suggested straightforwardly. "We'll always be friends."

"I'm no hand for friends," said Black Pawl. "It's a milk-and-water word, where a man and a woman are in the matter."

She said, a little impatiently: "You're not very reasonable. And—you'd be the better for friends, Black Pawl."

He leaned back in his chair, and his eyes fell; he thought, abruptly, of his son; and a great hopelessness settled down upon the man. He did not know just what he had hoped for; he had not meant to speak thus to this girl. After all, what could he expect? Hers was the privilege to laugh at him. He was an old man, and he must accept youth's judgment upon him.

Through the current of his thoughts, he heard Marvin, the cook, come down into the cabin to get food from the captain's stores, below. He heard Ruth speak to the man, and heard them talk together. Ruth liked old Marvin; they were, in a fashion, cronies. She got up and stood and talked with him, while Black Pawl's sick thoughts ran on.

He forgot the other two were there, and thought of himself, and of Red Pawl. He was sick with the sickness of despair. He felt himself weak and shaken, and cursed himself for being weak. He thought that he had thrown himself at this child's feet, and she had laughed at him. Some day she would tell Dan Darrin, and they would laugh together at the weakness of Black Pawl. The thought was bitter, for strength was his pride and boast, and there was no living man who had seen that strength broken. All his life he had been known for a strong man and a ruthless one; and this frail girl had laughed at him. The tale would go abroad.

He did not care for that. Let men laugh; they would not laugh to his face. But the girl would laugh—she and Dan Darrin. And—would they not have the right to mock him? Was he not a jest and a joke upon the face of the waters? He was master of the *Deborah*, and master of all aboard her! Did she know that, this child? She must know; yet she was not afraid. Rather, she laughed.

He heard Marvin come up from the storeroom, and speak to the girl again. Here at least was fair target for his wrath. He stormed to his feet and toward the man. "On deck, you swipe!" he roared. "Get out o' my sight."

Marvin scuttled up the companion; and Black Pawl turned again to where the girl sat, and looked down at her with black and knitted brows. His hair was tumbled, his cheeks were lined, his eyes were sunken. He trembled weakly where he stood, and she was infinitely sorry for him, and stood up to face him, and said softly:

"Come, you're tired. Do let me put you to sleep."



Spies got up, the red knife in his hand.

## Pawl

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Ruth laughed a choking little laugh and said: "I told you I wanted you to be a father to me, Black Pawl!" His arms went around her then, gently.



"I tell you, I'm not minded to sleep," he answered thickly.

"No matter," she smiled. "You will be. It's what you need." She touched his arm. He flung her hand away.

"Mark this," he said. "You've not understood what I've been telling you. I say Dan Darrin's not to have you while I live. Is that clear to you?"

Faintly troubled, she said: "You're sick, and tired. You don't know what you say. Please lie down."

"I do know what I say. I do mean what I say. This is my ship, the *Deborah*. Nothing passes here save with my will. I say, this matter of Dan is to be forgotten—till I say the word."

She answered, eyes braving his: "You're a strong man, Cap'n Pawl. And—master of the ship. But there are some things beyond your command. I am one of them; my heart the other. We're Dan's."

"You're overly brave," he sneered.

"I am not afraid," she answered.

"You told me once you could never be afraid of me."

"I could never be afraid of you."

"Why not?"

"I do not know."

He lifted a hand in a tense, impatient gesture. "Listen," he commanded. "Your Dan is a mile away; he'll not be back this hour. None will come into this cabin save on my word. I tell you, I claim you from Dan Darrin, and I stick to that claim."

"I tell you," she said steadily, "that your strength and your claims are nothing to me. I'm Dan's."

His head lowered as he looked deep into her eyes for a flicker of panic. "You are not afraid, when I say this much to you?"

"No."

The strength of her, the cold courage, the steady gaze, maddened him. For a long instant their eyes met and held; then he turned away from her, walked aimlessly across the cabin, turned by the companion to look back at her. His lips moved as though there were a bitter taste in his mouth, and the girl found herself longing to run to him, to comfort him and quiet him and bid him rest. She dropped her eyes, that he might not see this tenderness in them, and turned slowly back to her cabin.

It was no more than three paces from where she stood to her cabin door. But as she reached the door, she heard him moving; and she turned in the doorway and looked at him.

He was coming toward her slowly; his eyes were bitter and angry, and he stumbled as he came.

She waited in the open door. Within arm's-length of her he stopped, swaying. He felt himself checked by a spiritual wall about her that barred him out. For a space he could not stir. He did not speak; she said no word. For seconds they stood thus, unmoving.

Then Black Pawl cursed. "Hell's fire!" he muttered, and dropping his great hands upon her shoulders, he pushed her slowly backward, into her narrow cabin. Once inside, he thrust her from him, and she caught and steadied herself against the cabin wall. He swung the door shut, then setting his shoulders against it, looked at her.

She met his eyes without flinching.

"Well, are you still so brave?" he demanded hoarsely, his lips twisting in a mocking smile.

"I am not afraid," she answered.

His brows knit. He asked dully: "What do you mean, child? How can you say that? How can you help fearing? Why are you not afraid?"

She dropped her eyes, as though she were thinking; and after a little she looked up at him again. "I'll tell you, if I can, Cap'n Pawl," she said.

"Tell on," he bade her. "Tell on. There's time."

"I don't know whether you will understand," she began, half to herself. "But—I believe in God. Just as all men do! Just as all men must, in their hearts, believe. I believe there is a God; I believe He is a very real God, caring for us. I believe He is caring for me. So I can never be afraid."

"And—there is another thing," she said. "I told you there is good in you, even though men do call you Black Pawl. I am not afraid of you, because of that good in you. I—understand you, perhaps, better than you understand yourself. You are tired out, with your fighting the storm. You are unhappy for Red Pawl's sake. You are sick with—the liquor you have been drinking. It is almost true of you that you know not what you do."

"But you do know; and there is too much good in you to lie silent through the doing. It would never let you do that which you try to wish to do, Cap'n Pawl." She smiled suddenly, looking confidently up at him. "As a matter of fact," she said, "if

you could have driven yourself on— But you can never do it, Cap'n Pawl. You could not. So, I am not afraid."

He had listened to her, frowning with the effort at thought; and when she ceased speaking, he remained silent, as though considering. His head was splitting with a throbbing ache; his eyes were coals. He could not think. Of all that she had said, he only understood that she was not afraid. It was like a challenge flung in his teeth. He said thickly:



"Not afraid? By the eternal, we'll try that!"

His right hand dropped on her shoulder, and he made to jerk her toward him, against his breast, but she came passively, unresisting. He caught her head in the crook of his arm and gazed down into her eyes. And then suddenly he felt a sickening shame as though he were beating a child. And she had not resisted! What did she not resist, fight him, give him obstacles to overcome?

She remained passive; but it was hard for her to breathe. When her lungs were choking, she was forced to set her hand against his breast and push herself away from him.

He cried out at that. So! She was fighting at last. He let her go, for the exultant triumph of recapturing her. When she was free of him, he reached out and caught her shoulder again.

Under his harsh hand, the light fabric of her waist was torn. A wave of sickness at what he had done swept over him, and he dropped his hand.

And then he saw, hanging by a thin gold chain about her neck a locket of gold. It was such a locket as he had given to his wife long years ago.

## CHAPTER XIII

WHEN Black Pawl saw the locket, his hands fell and hung limply at his sides. He stared at the little golden thing; and his eyes blurred, and he brushed his knuckles across them, and stared again.

Under his gaze, bent thus upon her throat, the girl crimsoned; she did not understand, but she saw that a change had come in the man. She was breathless, wondering and bewildered. She put up her hands to gather her waist together; and Black Pawl caught her wrists gently, and held them aside; and then he fumbled the locket in his thick fingers, and bent near her, so that his mop of iron-gray hair brushed her face. She looked down and saw that he was trying to open the locket with a blunted thumb-nail.

When the locket was open, he cried out, hoarsely. For it held, on the one side a daguerreotype of a little boy; and on the other, an old and faded photograph of a woman. A long time he gazed at it; then he closed it and lifting his eyes, looked into Ruth Lytton's eyes as he did so. She saw the black tragedy that

The seamen stood in a little whispering group. The ship was as still as death; for Death was hovering over the *Deborah's* decks in that hour.



There was infinite charity in her for Black Pawl's sins. And—she knew the man was not himself, was half sick, was broken.

The matter of the locket meant nothing to her. She supposed that sight of it had evoked some ancient memory, but she had no guess as to what that memory might be. Standing alone in her cabin,—he had closed the door behind him,—she was trembling at the thought, not of her own peril, but of the terrible remorse and abasement in Black Pawl's cry to God. She had never seen a man thus completely broken and helpless before the Unseen; and there was a majesty about the sight that gripped her.

Nevertheless, after a moment, she felt a quite human anxiety. She had seen the full depths of Black Pawl's self-contempt; she was suddenly afraid that the man would harm himself. And when she thought of the chance of this, she forgot everything else in her haste to find him, and comfort him, and tell him all was well.

She opened the cabin door to come out; she saw Black Pawl at the table, his head dropped on his hands.

She was, at first, a little awed by this sight of a strong man crushed. Then the woman in her cried out with soft compassion; and she crossed quickly and stood beside him and touched his head.

"It's all right," she told him softly. "It's all right, Cap'n Pawl."

She could think of nothing else to say.

His shoulders shook with a convulsive tremor; and she knew that he was crying, crying like a child, with his head upon his arms. A woman's tears confuse a man; but a man's tears frighten and appall a woman. Ruth was shaken by the knowledge that Black Pawl was sobbing; she did not know what to do. She could only plead: "Please! Please don't! It's all right, truly."

With a curious abruptness he was calm. He lifted his head and looked up at her. His face was streaked with tears; and yet it was strangely serene. It was haggard, and yet it was at peace. There was none of the old mockery in his eyes, and none of the evil. It was as though his

tears had washed him clean. He looked up at her; and she smiled at him, hand on his hand, and pleaded:

"Don't be unhappy!"

He was studying her countenance, line by line. And after a moment, he said in a quiet, deep voice that was unlike him:

"Will you sit down? Across the table there? I want to talk with you."

She said, "Of course," and she crossed and sat down, facing him. Again, for a little, he did not speak. Then he held out his hand.

"Will you let me see your locket?" he asked.

She unclasped the chain about her throat, and passed chain and locket across to him. He held them in his hands for a moment; then he opened the locket and looked long at the two pictures inside, and there were tears in his eyes again. She asked softly:

"What do they mean to you?"

He did not answer her question; he asked one of his own. "Ruth, where did you get this locket?"

"My mother gave it to me," she said.

"Who was your mother?"

"Anna Lytton."

He touched the daguerreotype in the locket. "Who is this?"

"My brother," she told him. "He died before I was born."

"And who is—this other?" He touched the photograph of his wife.

"My mother."

He hesitated; then he asked: "Is it a—good picture of her?"

"Oh, yes. It was taken before I was born. But it was very like her."

The man wetted his lips with his tongue. "Who was your father?" he asked.

"His name was Michael Lytton."

was eating him, and touched his arm pityingly. "It's all right," she whispered. "It's all right, truly." She knew the man was broken with shame, even though she did not understand.

He was studying her with glazing eyes. His daughter! She was his daughter—his daughter, and mirror of his love of the years ago.

He tottered, as though under a succession of blows. He swayed where he stood; and abruptly he lifted his hands and cried out, in the agony of this new knowledge, and in a passionate abasement, to the God he had forgotten.

Silent, then, he seemed to listen for an answer. And then the man's head drooped, and he turned stumblingly, and opened the door of Ruth's cabin, and went out. He dropped into a chair by the table there. His head fell forward on his crossed arms.

The girl was blankly bewildered by what had passed. There was no fear in Ruth Lytton; there had never been fear in her.

"What was he like?"

The girl shook her head. "I never knew him."

His head bowed over the locket. When he looked up again, it was to ask: "Where have you lived? What was your life? Will you tell me?"

She nodded. "We—had a strange life," she said. "Ever since I was a little girl, we have lived among the islanders. My mother was a missionary; she knew how to make sick people well, and they loved her. We stayed with them always; but she always told me that when she died, I must go home."

"Home?" he asked. "Where did she say your home was?"

"She said I was to go to people named Chase, who live in a town called Hingham, in Massachusetts."

He nodded, as though he had expected this. His wife had been Anna Chase of Hingham, in the days when he wooed her.

"Do you remember any other life but this among the islanders?" he asked.

She shook her head. "No. I know we came out on a ship, Mother and I, and landed at the islands, and stayed there. I think the captain of the ship was unkind to my mother. I think we slipped away from him. But—she never told me this. It is half memory, half guess."

"You never went home while your mother lived?"

"No."

"Did she ever tell you why?"

"She said her work was in the islands, that she could not leave them."

"Was she happy?"

The girl considered; and her eyes were dim. "Not always," she said.

The man leaned back, resting his hands against the table-rim. "You know," he said humbly, "I wish you would talk to me. Tell me about your mother."

"What do you want to know?" she asked uncertainly.

"Everything."

There was an intensity in his voice that startled her. Nevertheless she began, obediently, to tell him of her mother. And once she had begun, there was no faltering. She was so full of things to tell, and it was so pleasant to be able to speak to one who cared to listen to these things.

THEY were both so absorbed that they did not hear when the boats returned to the ship. The missionary, coming a little uneasily down the cabin companion, found them still sitting at the table, facing each other; and the girl was talking swiftly and eagerly to the listening man.

When Black Pawl saw the missionary, he got up from where he sat. "Ah, Father," he said softly, "I have been waiting for you."

The missionary had an eye trained to see into the souls of men. He saw that a great change had come upon Black Pawl; and he saw that the change was good. His old eyes lighted.

"I am here," he said.

Black Pawl looked toward the girl. "Ruth," he told her gently, "your Dan is back. Go bid him welcome."

The girl started toward the companion; then abruptly remembering, she turned back to her cabin—her waist was torn. She was out in a matter of minutes, in a fresh one. The missionary had asked Black Pawl: "What is it you wish of me?" But Black Pawl signed to him to wait.

When the girl came out and saw the two men, and saw their steady faces, and the somber grief in Black Pawl's eyes, she went to the Captain's side. "Cap'n Pawl," she said to him under her breath, "you must not be unhappy. Please. You are a good man. . . . Kiss me."

He bent with a swift rush of feeling and kissed her forehead; and she smiled up at him, then turned and fled to the deck where Dan waited for her.

Black Pawl faced the missionary. He turned to the table. "Father," he said, "sit down."

The missionary obeyed. He took the chair the girl had occupied. Black Pawl sat across the table; and after a minute, he began. "I've a thing to say that is hard saying," he told the old man. "But—it has got to be told. Listen, Father."

And so, straightforwardly, he told his story. He did not excuse himself; he did not palliate that which he had meant to do. He painted it in its ugliest colors, painted himself as black as the pit. He began with the moment when he and Ruth were left alone upon the schooner; he told how each step had come to pass. And he came at last to the moment when his rough hand had torn her waist, and he saw the locket at her throat. There was no heat in the man, no hysteria. He told it baldly; and at the last said:

"So I knew she was my daughter—my daughter."

He was still, with that word. He seemed to wait upon the missionary; but the old man did not speak. Black Pawl watched him; and as he watched, into the Captain's eyes stole something of that old, hard mockery of all the world. "So, Father!" he exclaimed harshly. "Is that not the unforgivable sin?"

The missionary looked up at him in mild surprise. "It seemed to me that Ruth had forgiven you," he suggested.

BLACK PAWL said hoarsely: "Oh, aye! But—there's none other like her in the world."

"If she has forgiven, there is no one else to blame you," said the missionary.

"What of God?" Black Pawl asked humbly; and the missionary looked at him and smiled a wise and kindly smile.

"You do not call him 'my God,'" he suggested.

Black Pawl shook his head. "No—no. He's mine too. There's no escaping Him. But—what will He say to this matter, Father?"

The missionary rested his hands on the table, and his eyes met Black Pawl's. "It seems to me, Cap'n Pawl, that you are a new man, reborn, this hour. Is it so?"

"Aye," said Black Pawl. "It is so."

"Then—this ugly matter. Perhaps it was God's way of awakening you."

"Harsh measures, Father."

"Harsh measures were needed, my son," said the missionary gently.

Black Pawl nodded. His eyes clouded thoughtfully; he studied the other. "Father," he said at last, "you must have guessed this thing from what I told you."

"I did guess," said the other honestly.

"Why did you not tell me?"

"I was in doubt," said the missionary humbly. "I was in doubt. But—it seemed to me that matter was in His hands."

Black Pawl nodded. "Oh, aye." Then he was still again, with his thoughts. After a time, he asked like a child seeking knowledge: "Will there be punishment, Father?"

The missionary shook his head. "I do not know. Have you not suffered?"

"I would die to wipe the thing away," Black Pawl cried passionately.

"To die is not hard," said the missionary. "It is often merely release from unhappiness and pain."

"There is nothing I would not do to wipe the thing away," said the Captain steadily. The other lifted his hand to dismiss the thought.

"Eh, Cap'n Pawl," he said whimsically, "if there is to be punishment, it will come. If there is to be a cup of atonement, it will be offered to your lips."

The two men sat thoughtfully silent for a space, upon that word; and it may have been that their thoughts took the same channel, for Black Pawl was thinking of his son when the missionary asked at last: "Will you tell Red Pawl of this?"

Black Pawl hesitated. "I do not know." And he added, after a moment: "Father, I fear Red Pawl. And—I never feared him before. I am afraid for Ruth's sake. Not for my own, by the eternal!"

"Would telling him—protect her?" the missionary asked. Black Pawl laughed bitterly.

"I've taught him never a scruple in all the world," he said. "And—for what this would mean to him—God knows!"

The old man said sternly: "Red Pawl is a charge upon your soul."

"Aye," said Black Pawl. "And heavy there!"

They said no more of Red then. The missionary asked: "You told Ruth who you were?"

Black Pawl shook his head. "No, I told her nothing. What right have I to thrust such a father on the child?"

The man of the church smiled. "There's no matter of thrusting," he said. "You are her father; and—I know Ruth. She will want to know." He got up and went purposefully toward the companion. Black Pawl came swiftly to his feet.

"No, Father!"

But the missionary was calling up to the deck, "Ruth!" She answered. "Will you come below?"

SHE came down the companion. The missionary took her by the hand. Black Pawl stood rigid by the table. She looked from one to the other.

It was the missionary who told her—very simply, and very briefly. Not all that was to be told, not (Continued on page 94)



*SAM HOOD* was some salesman, and if it hadn't been for a certain girl—but oh, well, the desire biggest in his heart was so to shape his course so as to be—

# HOME OVER SUNDAY

By  
BARKER SHELTON

Illustrated by  
J. J. GOULD



**R**UMOR, traveling a mouth-to-mouth course eastward, came whispering into the ear of the third vice-president of the H. B. Cole Woven Hose and Belting Company that old man Crawford, of the Crawford Car-wheel Works, out in Middleburg, was dissatisfied with the belting he was using in his establishment.

The third vice-president in question, being young, jam full of pep, the husband of H. B. Cole's youngest and prettiest daughter, and anxious to prove to Dad-in-law that he was one grand little gleaner in worth-while fields, promptly got busy with a route-list. It was the route-list of Sam Hood's late spring trip over his territory. So, just as Sam was making his get-away from Ballardville, he got the third vice-president's wire with its instructions to drop everything else for the time being and get to Middleburg while the getting was good.

There was no need to tell Sam what a whale of an order it would be if he landed it. Neither was there any necessity of enlightening him on the fact that old man Crawford would not be partial to anything the H. B. Cole concern could offer him. Sam, scowling at the message, felt he was a better judge of his own stamping-grounds than any young upstart who held down his job because he had happened to marry one of H. B.'s daughters. A waste of time, a fool's errand, a most annoying and useless break in a trip which had been going particularly big—no chance to use his own judgment in the matter, either; a second perusal of the third vice-president's wire settled that point beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Sam hit the trail for Middleburg. He got there Saturday afternoon. He discovered old man Crawford had departed for parts unknown over Sunday. He gathered—by certain adroit methods of which he was past master—that old man Crawford would be in his nearest imitation to a receptive mood immediately after his return from this little break in the routine of running the car-wheel works—say Monday morning at eight o'clock.

Sam poked gloomily away from the works—acres of them, stretching along the banks of a sluggish, marshy creek which boasted on the map of being a river: batteries of chimneys shooting smoke and flame against smudgy clouds of their own making, furnaces roaring, forges sending up an unholy din. He was looking up trains on a little folder as he went. The folder held no comfort for him. There was not a live town within striking distance, if he was to be back in Middleburg by eight Monday morning.

Therefore it was Sunday here in Middleburg for him. At the Central House! Sam knew enough about the Central House to fill a book; it wouldn't have been a best seller, either. He said a few little things about the third vice-president which didn't hurt

the third vice-president at all but which relieved Sam's feelings immensely, and turned his steps towards his over-Sunday prison.

A bedlam chorus of whistles was letting loose on the car-wheel works for closing-down time when Sam meandered through the portals of the Central House and graced the register with his sprawling John Hancock. As he stood there while the clerk put the usual annotations after his signature and wasted time at the key-rack, some one came down the stairs, spied Sam there at the desk, grinned, pounced upon him, dropped the bag he carried and smote Sam a couple of breath-taking whacks of affection between the shoulder-blades.

Sam swung about. It was Dave Miller, who hardwared the territory which Sam hosed and belted. Dave was alive in every last fiber of his body; inaction was a crime to him; his fertile mind saw to it that nothing of that sort dwelt in his immediate vicinity. A gleam of hope came into Sam's eyes for the first time since he had landed in Middleburg. Sunday with Dave Miller in Middleburg or anywhere else wasn't so bad. But his eyes dulled again as he saw the bulging club bag at Dave's feet.

"Whatcher doing here, Sam?"  
"After old man Crawford."  
"Who told you to? You got better judgment than that yourself."

"H. B.'s son-in-law—the new one. Had another of his bright little spasms."

"That child's laying out to get himself assassinated by you. I can see that plainly, Sam. Seen Crawford?"

"Can't till Monday. He's flew."

"You're stuck here over Sunday, then. Tough luck!"

"Wish you weren't through here, Dave."

"I aint. I've got three more days before I'm done with this village. Just going home over Sunday."

"You wont be back before Wednesday or Thursday, then, I take it."

"You bet your homely face I will! I'm living at Richwood now. Yep, moved the wife and kids out there two months ago. That's what you'd ought to do, Sam. Establish a joint of your own out here in the territory you cover. Lets you get home over Sundays—see? Great stuff!"

"Wish you were going to be here to-morrow, Dave," said Sam, more fervently than he imagined.

"I'd like to, fine. It's four years since you and I have had an old-home week of it together. But it can't be did. The wife and kids will be looking for me on the eight-twenty-seven. Make it every Saturday night now as regularly as clockwork."

"Sure, Dave! Of course! My regards to the Missus and the infants!"

Dave settled his bill, said a breezy adieu to Sam and departed trainward in a built-over delivery truck that called itself a taxi. Sam trailed up two flights of stairs in the wake of a bell-hop who was sixty-two by the calendar and eleven by his mental equipment—or lack of it.

The latter opened the door of Room 28. The only thing that could have made Room 28 more funereal would have been a casketed corpse between the front windows. Sam gave his major domo a quarter, passed up an amiable offer of ice water, and sat down by one of the windows in a stuffed chair that shot out young geysers of dust when he hit it.

Middleburg offered him a fine view of sooty roofs with the gaunt chimneys of the car-wheel works down by the river looming beyond them. The smell of the meal which the Central House menu labeled "Supper" poured in through the open transom above his door. Closing the transom against it proved without avail. It came in just the same.

It struck Sam that he had spent a fearful bunch of Sundays marooned in just such places as this. It struck him at the same time that he was in all probability in for a whole lot more of it in the future. Lucky Dave Miller, with his nice little place back at Richwood. It must be a nice place, because there wasn't a chance of Dave's having anything but a nice place. Every last Sunday of his life Dave could slip back home. No such dumps as this for Dave to hate himself in during the dead hours between Saturday night and Monday morning!

No one knew better than Sam Hood the futility of life's might-have-beens. They got you nothing; they were expensive luxuries. They were something no red-blooded man could afford to fool with, because they turned him into a whining, self-pitying caricature of what he should be—handicapped him on his job, lost him his friends. He had had his experience with them, but he had got over them long ago—or he thought he had got over them. Maybe his own particular assortment of might-have-beens wasn't so wholly embalmed as he had supposed.

He opened the bag the senile bell-hop had deposited on his bed. Out of it he dug a flat leather case, worn from much handling. Within that worn little old case was a photograph, fading at the edges, of a girl in a big white hat, a picture that looked good to Sam despite its long-passed, up-to-the-minute style which the perspective of the years now made ridiculous. That fading photo-

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He went down to supper and felt worse. Most people do, after a Central House supper. He couldn't get out of his head a string of odious comparisons. They all centered around Dave Miller's lot and his own.

He came out of the dining-room and started up to his room again. He knew he was headed for another orgy with that picture of the dead girl under the obsolete white hat. But halfway up the second flight he turned sharply about. He pulled himself together with all the will he could summon. He said—he thought he said it to himself, but in reality he spoke aloud: "This thing has got to stop. Right here! Right now!" He even engineered a sardonic grin. He went back to the desk in the office.

The clerk was busy at the moment. Sam didn't wait. He went out onto Main Street—like a thousand other Main streets in a thousand similar towns, save that this one was a trifle more grimy with smoke from the chimneys of the car-wheel works.

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A glow of light, the door ajar, proclaimed the place open. Within was a small safe, a large stove, a railing dividing off the third of the front of the place from the rest of it, and near the railing, at a flat-topped desk, a girl tilted back in a chair. Evidently she was drowsing, for she opened her eyes slowly as Sam came in. They were brown eyes, large, likable.

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"I plead guilty."

"Staying at the Central House?"

Sam nodded.

"Lord help you!"

"Amen!" said he fervently.

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"Something like that."

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"I'll cover the damages."

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"Nothing at all. Who'll look after your meals? You yourself?"

"No. I imagine I'd better return my rented kids in good condition."

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Sam went back along Main Street. He turned in at the door

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Apparently he had invaded the residential section of Middleburg. Presently a sign on a corner made it clear to him that he was on South Cedar Street. Pleasant place! Nice houses! Maybe he could spot his own. He quickened his steps. No sign of any unoccupied house for some distance! Windows alight all the way along! Pleasant domestic vignettes now and then through those windows where the shades happened to be up!

But at last he came to a house well back from the street. It was dark, save for a faint light from one of the side windows. It looked just about the size of six-rooms-and-a-bath. Moreover there was a squeaking, banging sound as of shutters being opened.

Sam looked at his watch. Quarter past nine! He pussy-footed it across a stretch of lawn, crept noiselessly up to the window where the light showed feebly. He looked into what was plainly the dining-room of the house. Very pretty, very cozy dining-room!

A woman was dusting off the mantelpiece and setting some old china plates in a rack. After that she wound up a little mahogany clock in the center of the shelf and turned toward the light, the better to get the time from her own wrist-watch before she set the clock. And turning, her face was toward Sam outside the window. The woman tidying up the place was Miss Sarah H. King herself. Sam beat a hurried and abashed retreat. She wouldn't want him to know she had done it personally, of course. But it was mighty white of her, all the same.

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"Only me—and two kids."

"You—and two kids?"



"I just dropped round to make sure everything is all right," she said.

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He had expected to find the house as he had seen it earlier—a

dim, shadowy outline behind the trees on the lawn. It wasn't anything of the sort. Its windows blazed with light. Even the porch light was aglow.

"That sure looks homey enough," Sam muttered, and went up the steps.

An artist's hand had arranged the hall. There was a woman's work-basket near the door, a chair beside it, a bit of unfinished fancywork, the needle sticking in it, on the chair. Sam said: "Gee!" four times and went into the living-room. There was a screen in front of the fireplace, and birch logs, burned down to embers, on the andirons. A little iron train of cars and a big cotton rabbit lay in front of the hearth as if tiny hands, grown tired of play, had just left them there. In the dining-room beyond, the table was spread.

"Well, what do you know about this?" he chuckled. "Supper! Wouldn't this make you bust out crying?"

He tried a sandwich and found it excellent. He touched off the spirit-lamp under the percolator. It presently sent up a most comforting bubbling.

Sam looked about him, grinned, sighed and finally scowled.

"You're plainy a mighty good-hearted sort, Miss Sarah H. King," he said. "The only trouble is you're too good-hearted. I said I wanted a home over Sunday, and you run away with the idea that I want a comfortable home. There are homes and homes—some of 'em comfortable, some of 'em—excuse me for addressing a lady in such terms—plain hell. That's what I was trying to make myself realize by this little experiment of mine. You've done a whole lot in the wrong direction."

Nevertheless he did not neglect the supper.

At ten o'clock Sunday morning Miss Sarah H. King walked down South Cedar Street. She paused before the one house in that vicinity which was set far back from the street. Sam Hood sat on the porch, rocking to and fro and smoking furiously. He seemed disturbed.

She went up the path. Sam stopped rocking and smoking and got up.

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"I can't find 'em; so the whole thing's gone flat."

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"I'll have them here in a half-hour."

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"Wait!" she urged with a certain grimness.

"They're mighty pretty kids," said he.

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He did not see the boy edging away from Miss King's skirt. He did not follow the uncanny swiftness of the movement which procured the stone from the edge of the gravel walk. He only knew that a sleepy old coach dog, drowsing in the sun in the back

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"It must have been some Sunday," said the girl, her voice trailing off in a ripple of laugh.

"It has."

"Has it been a complete success?"

"No—utter failure."

"They were too much for you?"

"Not half enough."

"I don't get you."

"I don't quite get myself."

"I thought you wanted them regular young imps."

"I did. And they are."

"Then aren't you satisfied?"

"No."

"Weren't they as troublesome as your own?"

"My own? I haven't any."

"You—haven't any?"

"I'm not even married."

Miss King's face changed. Sam didn't like the way it changed. It made him feel little, mean, unworthy.

"I thought," she said slowly, "you were a married man, away from home, lonely, trying to make a little make-believe home like your own for over Sunday. That was pretty, quaint. But if you're not the married man I thought you—"

"Perhaps I owe you an explanation."

"Perhaps you do," she said coldly.

Sam ran his hand through his hair.

"I don't know how to explain," he said at last.

"Come, children!" said she, stooping to touch the drowsy little girl.

"Wait!" said Sam.

"Why wait?"

"For that explanation. I'll get it after a little."

Miss King waited. She waited some few minutes. Sam seemed troubled. He kept wrinkling up his forehead and prodding his cheek with a doubled fist. He looked too boyish at that moment to be so disturbed. He didn't seem a man capable of any very great wrong.

"In my bag back at the hotel," said Sam, seeming to realize what a sorry beginning he was making of that explanation after all this time to think it over, "I've got the picture of a girl."

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"That doesn't tell me anything, Mr. Hood. Lots of other men have pictures of girls."

"She's dead."

"Oh!"

"Eight years ago."

Miss King bent her head.

"I'm dreadfully sorry," she said.

"Eight years ago; and I've carried that picture with me everywhere I went, and tortured myself with it. You know how I'd do it. Hit me worst always when some chap on the road was going home. Stabbed like a knife then."

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"Last night down at the Central House a chap I know—on the road like me—was going back home to Richwood to his wife and kids. I thought I'd got over mooning about things long ago. But I hadn't, it seemed. Went at it again, harder than ever. I said to myself it had got to stop. I said maybe all these might-have-beens I was hanging onto would have turned out something wholly different than I thought. I told myself maybe if there'd have been children they'd have been forward, troublesome little imps. I says to myself: 'Now, maybe if you had a chance to go home over Sunday, there wouldn't be any peace for you there at all.'"

"So I annexed the bright little idea of having that sort of a home for myself over Sunday—and remembering the experience the next time I got sloppy. It looked like a bright enough little idea. But you spoiled it."

"I? How?"

"Well, first place, last night when I got up here and found the place all lit up and cheerful, and fires going, and women's things and kids' things lying about,—just enough of 'em in just the right places,—and the supper all ready for me, one corking supper—"

"I didn't know."

"Of course you didn't. I'm not laying it up against you. You meant to be nice. You were—too darned nice. It got me—here." He put his hand to his throat.

He stooped to make easier the tousled little head on his knees.

"Then to-day again, bringing me these two kids; that went and spilled the beans again."

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"The limit," he conceded. "They kept me on the go from the minute they got here until they went asleep about a half-hour ago."

"Then," she said, looking at him with a queer light in her eyes, "it must be your fault, not mine, that your scheme didn't work out."

"It is. They did their worst for me, but I liked it. God help me, I never had such a bully day in all my life."

Miss King looked as if she were dying to laugh and to cry at the same time. She did neither. She held her face politely expressionless.

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"We?"

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"Give this to the party that let me have 'em for the day."

"You're welcome to them for the day. They are my dead sister's children."

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"How is the real estate game here in Middleburg?"

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"Don't tempt me. I wouldn't want to do you an injustice."

"What injustice could you do me?"

"Marrying you just to make things easier for myself and these two children."

"Would that be any greater injustice than me marrying you for the sake of having every Sunday like this one?"

"Perhaps not. Still—"

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dim, shadowy outline behind the trees on the lawn. It wasn't anything of the sort. Its windows blazed with light. Even the porch light was aglow.

"That sure looks homey enough," Sam muttered, and went up the steps.

An artist's hand had arranged the hall. There was a woman's work-basket near the door, a chair beside it, a bit of unfinished fancywork, the needle sticking in it, on the chair. Sam said: "Gee!" four times and went into the living-room. There was a screen in front of the fireplace, and birch logs, burned down to embers, on the andirons. A little iron train of cars and a big cotton rabbit lay in front of the hearth as if tiny hands, grown tired of play, had just left them there. In the dining-room beyond, the table was spread.

"Well, what do you know about this?" he chuckled. "Supper! Wouldn't this make you bust out crying?"

He tried a sandwich and found it excellent. He touched off the spirit-lamp under the percolator. It presently sent up a most comforting bubbling.

Sam looked about him, grinned, sighed and finally scowled.

"You're plainy a mighty good-hearted sort, Miss Sarah H. King," he said. "The only trouble is you're too good-hearted. I said I wanted a home over Sunday, and you run away with the idea that I want a comfortable home. There are homes and homes—some of 'em comfortable, some of 'em—excuse me for addressing a lady in such terms—plain hell. That's what I was trying to make myself realize by this little experiment of mine. You've done a whole lot in the wrong direction."

Nevertheless he did not neglect the supper.

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CHARLES LIVINGSTON BULL

HERE is another of those splendid stories of the wild life at the Edge of Civilization in the Berkshires. This time—

# LUCY— WILDCAT

By  
WALTER  
PRICHARD EATON

Illustrated by  
CHARLES LIVINGSTON BULL

LUCY was born with a price on her head. *Lucy* doesn't sound much like the name of a fugitive from justice, of a vicious character hunted for the legal reward. Nevertheless, *Lucy* is what she came to be called by all the countryside, no doubt just because *Lucy* is such a foolish name for a wildcat. *Lucy* is a nice name for the heroine of a poem by William Wordsworth, but as the Christian appellation for twenty-five pounds of gray-black and dirty white fur and muscle and claws roaming the rocky, precipitous slopes of one of the highest of the Berkshire Hills, seeking what it may devour, the name has sufficient incongruity to please the Yankee taste.

I hesitate a little to tell the entire story of *Lucy's* career, lest I be called a "nature-faker." It is all true, but those who raise the cry of nature-faking will never believe anything true about animals which goes contrary to what they themselves have seen, or the way in which the average run of animals behave. Nevertheless you cannot always predict animal conduct from the average run, any more than you can predict human conduct. There is more of the animal in humans than we used to suppose (before 1914, for instance), and there is more of the

human in animals. Anyhow, I'll take a chance, and tell *Lucy's* story in defiance of the scoffers.

But first I wish I could take you into the country where *Lucy* was born and brought up. I could, very easily, if you were here, and your wind was good, for it isn't more than a mile behind my house—or, rather, above my house. You may have been past the spot, indeed, purring along in your motor on your way to Stockbridge and Lenox. But going past it and going to it are quite different things. Leaping directly up from the State highway is the steep wall of the mountain, a long wall, or rather a series of jutting shoulders, stretching north and south for ten miles or more, with the summit a mile behind them, and beyond that more forests and scrub land, and then a precipitous wild drop into

New York State. This wall runs up for some distance timbered heavily with birches and chestnuts and other hardwoods, and then enters a belt of fallen, fern-covered boulders with hemlocks wedged between, and finally the almost sheer precipices which lead, in a series of steps, to the top of the shoulder, where there is a forest of storm-dwarfed jack pines. In this forest herds of deer winter, going up and down the mountain for water at the springs below, and for feed when the snow is lighter. On top of the ridge the snow is always blown thin, and some food is available there in the worst weather.

Just under the ridge, at the base of the precipices and among the fallen boulders below them, are numerous little caves or dens. Into these dens the fallen leaves drift; they are more or less protected in winter, and cool in summer. You might suppose it would be a likely spot for wildcats.

It is.

For the wildcat is after all a cat; and you know that the most domestic of pussies seldom cares for human society as such. It hangs around you because you feed it. (Of course, if you have a cat, you won't admit this—*your* cat is an exception!) It prefers to mind its own business, and often resents interference. The wildcat has these traits raised to the *nth* power. Furtive, sly, aloof, it wants to be let alone, to avoid contact with men, to go its own way. Though often heard yowling in the woods at night,—it has a blood-curdling yell, a sort of *meow-yang-yang-yang*,—it is seldom seen; and when it is seen, it is generally alone, sneaking along by itself, the very epitome of wild self-sufficiency.

Hence, if a mother cat wished to retire from all danger of contact with man and other disturb-

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ing things, she could, in our country, hardly pick a better place than the dens amid the boulders far up on the steep mountain-shoulder.

Almost no people ever get there. There is no trail except the dim paths used by the deer, which are known only to a few hunters and trappers. The undergrowth is a dense mass of laurel through which progress is difficult and even painful; going my best, it takes me one and a half hours to make the fifteen-hundred-foot ascent to the top of the ridge.

She would have a half-mile of trackless laurel hell and dense forest below her den, and two hundred feet of precipice above, and all around, for concealment, the dense hemlocks, the ferns which drape the rocks, the dead, fallen tree-trunks, the caked masses of last year's leaves still upheld on the fallen limbs which always litter a virgin wood, making little thatched roofs under which to creep.

This is the spot that Lucy's mother chose late one winter for her home, running far from the male cat who was Lucy's father, because the male wildcat is anything but a gentleman and has a fondness for killing his offspring soon after they are born, if he can find them when their mother is out foraging. If the mother is at home, he is wise enough to leave them alone! Lucy's mother, however, had no intention of bringing her family into the world where father would be likely to find them. She ran away from him ten miles, crossed a river on the ice, a swamp on the tussocks, and went up the mountain till she came to the fallen boulders. There, in a nice, warm den lined with dead leaves, under an overhanging rock and facing to the southward, she decided to establish her home; and there Lucy and three brothers and sisters were ultimately born.

There was no great family resemblance between them. Lucy was a decided brunette, very dark, which is the accepted type of beauty among wildcats, while her two sisters were gray and dirty brown, and her brother was more or less mottled, halfway between. Had you come upon them playing in front of their "door," however, on a warm spring day, while mother lay on her side, paws lazily outstretched, purring contentedly (but with one ear up and both eyes watchful), you would have said it was a pretty picture they made, and you might have called, "Come, kitty, kitty!"—and then beat it, as mother coiled with a spitting snarl, and leaped off the rock!

But like Wordsworth's *Lucy* few knew, and few could know, how this Lucy grew beside ways even less trodden than those beside the springs of Dove. In fact, none knew. Only twice that summer did any human being come up past the den, and on both occasions Lucy's mother heard them coming, and had the kittens far out of sight. A stray dog or two, to be sure, trailed her up the mountain after she had been down the slope and across the road into the swamp stalking pheasants. But a lone dog, without a hunter behind him, had no terrors for her. She did not court trouble, to be sure, relying on speed to escape it. But if she was forced to fight, she knew how, and if the dog got away, he was a sadder and a wiser pup. So Lucy grew unmolested with her brother and sisters, and learned the needed lessons of life in the vocational school at first conducted by her mother, and later by that still more ancient school-mistress Dame Nature.

The children were brought up, in fact, much like domestic kittens, ex-

cept that they were taught to avoid human beings, to keep out of sight of all strange things, to hide from strange noises. But even domestic kittens are thus brought up if their mother has gone wild. These were taught to fight in play, amid the dead leaves in front of the den, and to bare their claws and strike quick and hard when the mother cat pretended to resent their attempts to play with her, and made lightning dabs at them with her powerful paw. They were taught to climb a tree, and to conceal themselves amid the branches. They were taught, by watching their mother, how to lie out on a fallen log across the deep brown pool in the brook at the foot of the slope, motionless as a statue, and make a sudden plunge with one paw, claws out and curled upward, as an unwary trout came swimming past, catching it securely under the belly with sharp, relentless claws and tossing it quickly to the bank.

They learned, too, how to creep up on partridges sitting on their nests, or sleeping; how to crouch behind a bush along the rabbit-paths and wait patiently till a cotton-tail came by, or even, in favorable spots, how to lie out along a limb over the path and drop on the rabbit from above. They learned how to run through the forest, too, as well as how to wait, always zigzagging, nose near the ground, ready to pounce on any chance deer-mouse.



He heard a sudden snarl . . . saw the green flash of eyes, and made out a form stalking toward him.

At night, as their mother went hunting through the woods, she would every now and then raise her head and emit the startling, raspy, snarling yell—*meow-yang-yang-yang-yang*—which often causes some sleepy animal or bird to start in fright and betray its hiding-place. Lucy and her brother and sisters practiced this yell, rather feebly at first, but with growing confidence and volume. All these things they learned, first from watching their mother, and then from practice, after their mother drove them with cuffs from the maternal food-supply and made them hunt for themselves.

It was considerably after the self-sustaining point had been reached that they saw their mother do a strange thing. It was early morning, not yet sunup, and in the half-light you couldn't see far through the night-mists which still enveloped the mountain at the altitude of the den. The kittens were all asleep, and so was the mother cat, having just come in weary and also hungry, after a long trip to the plain for food, a trip which was unrewarded by anything satisfying to a healthy appetite.

The previous winter had been a hard one, with deep snow and extreme cold. As a result, the partridges and pheasants were few, and the rabbits had been largely killed off by great horned owls and goshawks which descended from the north; and now the picking for wildcats was pretty poor. Indeed, the mother cat that night had been so hungry that twice she had attempted to raid a hen-yard, being driven off by dogs both times. Now she suddenly started up from her first sleep, ears pricked up, white teeth just showing, yellow-green eyes intense. Her action roused the kittens, who also started up. On soft feet the mother cat went to the entrance of the den, the kittens following.

Something was coming down the precipice above. It swished through bushes like a deer, and a second later they all caught the deer smell—though, of course, by comparison with a dog or fox, their powers of smell were slight. But it was evidently a small deer, from the sound it made. Even at that, the kittens were surprised to see their mother sneak one paw out, then another paw out, till she glided almost like a snake up over the top of the boulder above the den, and from that to another, and so to another, till she was crouched directly over the deer-trail down the mountain. She had never hunted a deer before, and the kittens knew it was because she dreaded those terribly sharp hoofs, and the sharper horns of the buck.

Scarcely had she reached her post over the trail than a fawn appeared, a bit more than half grown, trotting and leaping down the dim game-trail, evidently seeking his mother. As he drew near the old cat, his nose told him there was danger, and he suddenly reared, and then swerved toward the thicker bushes. But with a yowl the cat sprang far out from the rock, and landed squarely on his shoulder.

The deer gave a frightened bellow and began to rear and plunge as he ran, endeavoring to batter the cat off his neck by diving sideways against trees. The cat, however, with incredible speed and agility, shifted from one side of his back to the other, keeping her fore-paws around his neck, claws sunk in deep, and tearing with her powerful, razorlike teeth. The kittens saw her disappear down the mountain on her wild ride, and as fast as they could, they scampered after.

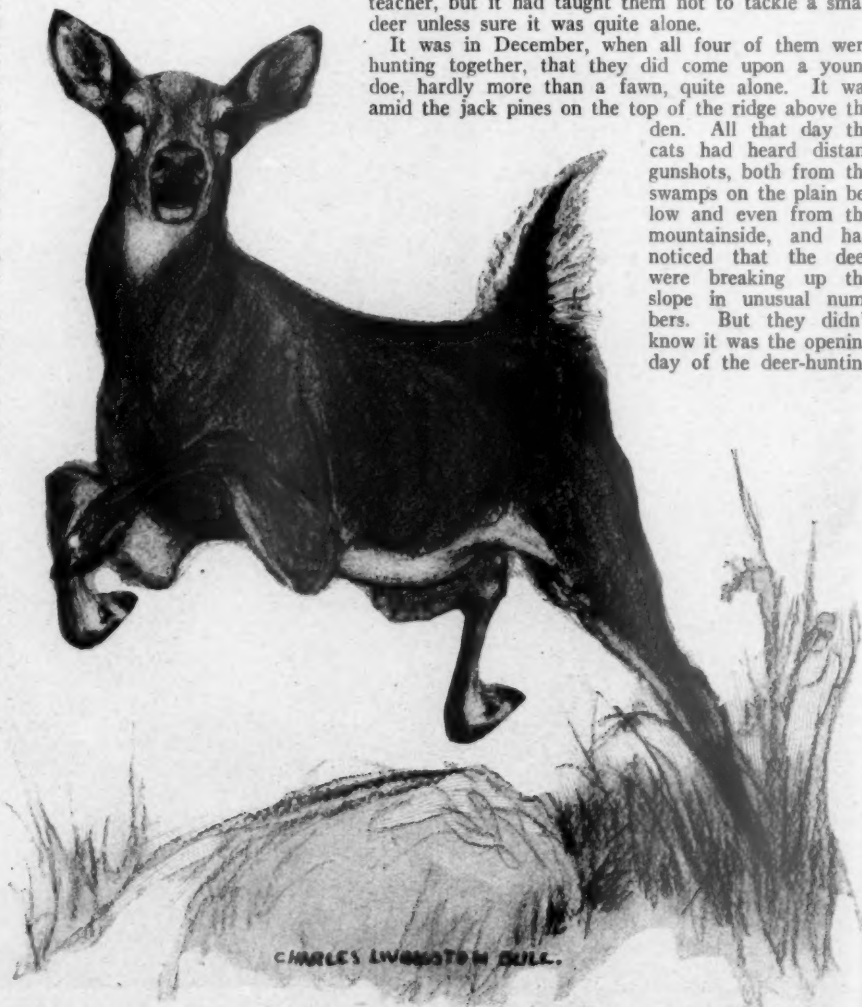
It was down in the chestnuts that they found her. The fawn had tripped and fallen, and that gave her the chance to get in a death grab at a vital artery. The little deer was breathing its last. The mother cat snarled and cuffed her hungry kittens away as they came

eagerly up to the meat, but presently she let them feed too, and all that day, their little stuffed bellies round as balloons, they slept in the sun at the mouth of their den, their mother sleeping beside them. Once or twice they woke up and purred. Life is certainly worth while when you are filled up on young, tender venison!

The kittens all grew rapidly, but Lucy fastest of all. She was destined to be a big cat, with dark fur, almost black, which thickened up as the frosty autumn nights came on, till she was worth to the hunter not only five dollars for the bounty, but another ten for her skin. Having no means of knowing this, however, Lucy was not vain. But she shared with her brother and sisters a memory of venison that made her, and them, rash with the rashness of youth. Their mother had departed now, they did not know where. They had attempted to follow, but she had turned, with a spit and a bristle of fur, and driven them back. The truth is, probably, she was weary of maternal cares for a time, and wanted to be rid of them, now they were large enough to shift for themselves. But they stayed on together in the old den, knowing no other home, and hunted the mountain, sometimes scattered, sometimes in a pack, and often going hungry for all their efforts.

Hence it was that Lucy and her brother, coming upon a fawn one day apart from its mother, sprang at it without hesitating. The brother missed it, but Lucy succeeded in landing on its back. It dived madly into the scrub, with the other cat at its heels, and almost before Lucy knew what was happening, she was knocked from its shoulder by a terrific blow. Even as she landed, she saw her brother rise in the air and go spinning into the bushes as the mother doe caught him with her hind heels. Two sore and sick cats retired to the den and nursed their wounds for several days before they were fit for hunting again. Experience is a hard teacher, but it had taught them not to tackle a small deer unless sure it was quite alone.

It was in December, when all four of them were hunting together, that they did come upon a young doe, hardly more than a fawn, quite alone. It was amid the jack pines on the top of the ridge above the den. All that day the cats had heard distant gunshots, both from the swamps on the plain below and even from the mountainside, and had noticed that the deer were breaking up the slope in unusual numbers. But they didn't know it was the opening day of the deer-hunting



CHARLES LIVINGSTON GILL.



season. They only knew the deer were up on the mountain in great numbers by mid-afternoon. On discovering the little doe, they tried their best to stalk it close enough to make a sure spring, but the deer was too quick for them and bolted over the ledge. The four cats bounded in full pursuit.

Down went the deer, over the precipitous rocks, twenty feet at a jump, the cats, with Lucy in the lead, only a jump or two behind. Below the ledges came the belt of tumbled, fallen boulders and rock-fragments, and here the doe had a harder time, as she had to work between the rocks, while the cats could leap from top to top. Lucy almost had her once. In fact, her claws did draw blood from the deer's hind quarters as she sprang from behind. But the deer just got through, and broke into the dense laurel. Here she



With a yowl the cat sprang far out from the rock, and landed squarely on his shoulder.

could spring over, when the cats had to work under, and she increased her lead. Once below the laurel, into the more open woods, she rapidly left the four pursuers behind.

Lucy was the last to give up the chase, but finally she turned back too, when the terrified deer broke out of the woods into an open field behind a house. Back up the mountain, Lucy made her way then, busily looking for mouse-tracks in the light snow as she went. If one couldn't have a deer, a mouse would do! Lucy was nothing if not philosophical.

But as it turned out, there was a greater tragedy lurking in this exploit than the mere loss of a venison supper. The craftiest hunter and trapper in all that section of the country had been hidden in a leaf-blind beside a deer-trail at the base of the upper ledges, thinking that the deer frightened by the hunters in the swamps below would be coming up this way. Two or three had passed him, but he was waiting for a fat buck, and didn't shoot. He had heard the racket when the little doe came plunging over the ledges, and had seen her go by, just out of gunshot, with the four cats in full pursuit. Then he had waited patiently, and he had seen the four cats come back, first one gray one, then a gray and a mottled one, then Lucy herself, so dark and fine-furred that his finger itched on the trigger. None of them, however, got near enough for a shot. They were headed, of course, for their den some distance off around a point. As sly as they, this hunter watched them disappear; nor did he attempt to follow. Instead, he went down the mountain as darkness gathered, and got down his rusty steel traps from their peg in the wood-shed.

He didn't tell anybody what he had seen, for two reasons. The first reason was that he didn't want anybody else to get those cats; the second reason was that he felt sure nobody would believe him, it being an accepted fact that wildcats hunt alone, not in packs, and never chase deer anyhow. But he had seen what he had seen, just the same.

He didn't set his traps at once. Instead he waited till deer-hunting week was over, and then he went fishing through the ice. When he had accumulated several pickerel, he journeyed up the mountain with his traps, picked up the cat-tracks in the snow, and close to their ranging trails he set his fish-baited steel jaws. Then he went down the mountain again, his pale blue eyes seeing far through the winter woods and taking in details that would quite escape your attention or mine, and reading records on the snow—the book he knew best.

Now, Lucy and her brother and sisters loved fish above all other food, just as a domestic cat does. Their noses might not be keen on a scent, as a dog's nose is, but they could certainly smell fish a long way off. Waking from her doze that afternoon, Lucy sniffed the frosty air and emitted a sharp, excited *meow*. The other three cats awoke too, and they also sniffed and grew excited. Out of the den all four of them went, and headed straight for the odor.

Of course, if it had been Big Reddy, the fox who lived down on the plains below, who had smelled some unexpected delicacy in the neighborhood, he wouldn't have made directly for it at all. He would have trotted in a big circle all around the smell, looking for the joker. He would have come, at some point in the circle, upon the tracks of the man who took the bait in, and that would instantly have intensified his suspicion. He would probably have followed down these tracks, and at some bush or other the trapper's carelessness would have allowed the bait to touch a twig, and the fox would have connected the bait-smell with the man track. That would have made him even more suspicious; and if, ultimately, he found the bait at the end of the man-track, no

matter how hungry he might be, the chances are Big Reddy would turn away. Hence the adjective *foxy*.

But Lucy and her tribe had no such keenness of nose, nor keenness of reasoning-powers. Fish meant food; that

was the extent of their logic—which is all right so far as it goes. With a snarl and a cuff Lucy drove away her brother and pounced at one fish. The other sisters each sprang for the fish they spotted.

An instant later there was a terrific yowling and screaming and thrashing of bodies.

Lucy, because of her incredible speed of action, had twitched up her paw as she felt it descend on something cold and metallic, and the jaws of the trap had got her by one toe only. With a snarl and a lunge, she tore herself free, and diving into the thick bushes, snarling with pain and anger, began indignantly to lick the bleeding stub of her amputated toe and claw. The brother, cuffed away at first, now reaped the reward of meekness and ate the fish in safety. But the other two cats, each caught fast in a trap, were howling and plunging, trying to wrench themselves free by main strength. The moosewood saplings to which the traps were fastened swayed as in a high wind. The snow was churned up. The lonely forest resounded to their cries. But all their efforts availed them nothing. Their heartless brother sneaked around and ate their fish too.

The next morning Lucy, nursing her wounded paw in the den, heard two gunshots not far away, and pushed deeper into the shadows, snarling at her brother. There were no sounds from the trapped sisters after that. But presently there was the smell of fish again. The brother, remembering only his feast of yesterday, sallied forth. But Lucy was, like Peter's wife's mother, sick of a fever, and lay still, licking her paw. Presently she heard her brother screaming, but still she did not budge. She slept fitfully that day, his cries now and again awaking her, and at nightfall felt a little better, and very hungry, for it had been two days now since she had tasted food.

The fish smell was still in the air. Lucy went forth, her foot bleeding again as the crusty snow cut it, and ate first the fish at her brother's trap. Then she sniffed. There was more somewhere about. But Lucy was capable of learning by experience. She approached it warily. The Thing which had hurt her before had been on the ground almost under the fish. The fish was placed at the base of a rock. Lucy climbed up on the rock, lay flat on her belly, and cautiously lowered her well paw down, down, till one claw caught in the fish, and she could hook it up. Seizing it in her mouth, she went back to the den with it hastily, and ate it there at her leisure. Then she slept.

She was waked by a single shot, and of course became instantly alert. This time her senses told her, presently, that danger was approaching; she glided out of the den in the dim morning light, for the sun was not yet up, and sneaked like a ghost over the snow, and between the rocks, up the precipices above. After a time, crouched in a thicket on the topmost ledge, she peered back and saw one of the feared and hated race of men standing alert near the mouth of the den, and then coming on as if to follow up her trail. She turned once more and headed through the brush toward the summit of the mountain. She found a warm spot on the south side of a rock, and slept all day in the sun, letting her paw heal, and when night came she hunted, but in vain. The next day instinct led her back to the old den.

As she came once more to the top of the ridge, the fish-smell greeted her. This time the fish was close to the den, and at the base of a straight-faced rock too high to reach down from above

to the fish. But Lucy had other resources. She climbed a smallish hemlock, crept cautiously out on a lower branch till it sagged far down with her weight and again sneaked up the fish on her claw. She nearly fell into the trap, to be sure, but managed to land on her feet at a safe distance. Then she took her meal back up the ledge, having no desire to be wakened by a gun-barrel poked into the den.

Now, our trapper friend, having already three cats to show by way of proof, had told his story at last (and collected his bounty), and he didn't hesitate to add as new embellishment the tale of the fourth cat, Lucy, who could steal bait out of a trap, and was minus a toe off her front paw, thanks to her first lesson. Naturally, since traps seemed of no avail, somebody suggested a hunt. That was how it happened that as Lucy was returning one morning from pheasant-hunting down in the young pine thickets at the base of the mountain, taking the stone wall for a path as it was easier going, she heard suddenly the deep, purposeful baying of two hounds on her trail.

Well, if the dogs were after her, they would have considerable of a jaunt! Lucy's idea of getting away from a dog was simply to run and run till she had gone so far the dog gave up in despair. So now she headed straight up the mountain, on over the ledges, through the scrub above, over the bare, wind-swept summit cone, down the other side, across the sunny fields of the tableland which lies up there behind the dome of the big mountain, and avoiding the few scattered farms, into the dense woods on the farther side. These, however, were no ordinary dogs, she began to realize. They weren't mere stray hunters; they were trained, hard-working hounds. Ever they came baying steadily on her trail, not getting dangerously close yet, but certainly not dropping behind. Lucy rested. She was weary, and her paw hurt her, for it wasn't yet completely healed, nor the sickness all gone from her. Her rest let the dogs up too close for comfort. She plunged quickly down the cliffs ahead of her, where they drop into New York State, the dogs now in full cry behind, for one of them had caught sight of her.

Lucy was going it blind now—she was in a spot where she had never been before. Leaping along in a deep gorge beside a brook, the dogs almost at her heels, she suddenly found herself at the jumping-off place. The brook simply slid over a lip of rock and plunged straight down sixty feet! There was no turning back, for the only way back was up the gorge. Lucy didn't want to fight two dogs. She saw a tree, one of three or four pine trees down here beside the brook, growing close to the face of the cliff above her, and rising fifty feet without a limb. Just as the first dog was almost on her, she sprang for this tree, and went up the trunk just as you've seen your cat go up a tree when the neighbor's dog came into the yard.

This was exactly what the hounds expected. Having treed their quarry, they began to bark excited signals to the hunters who were coming on behind (a long way behind, by now), and to jump around the base of the trunk.

But Lucy kept on up into the branches. Once in their protection, she looked about her. Higher up, a branch leaned out and almost touched the cliff-face. Lucy went up to it, out along it, and measured the distance to the little ledge she saw on the cliff-face. Then she sprang. The dogs, seventy-five feet below, didn't see her spring or hear her soft, padded paws land on the ledge. From this ledge a slanting crevice of the rock, or small "chimney," as a mountaineer would call it, led up another thirty feet to the

top of the precipice. Lucy got into this crevice, and with the help of the frozen moss and mold lodged in it, worked her way to the top. There she crouched a moment, looking over the rim with her yellow-green eyes at the dogs below, and then slipped quietly and easily into the forest.

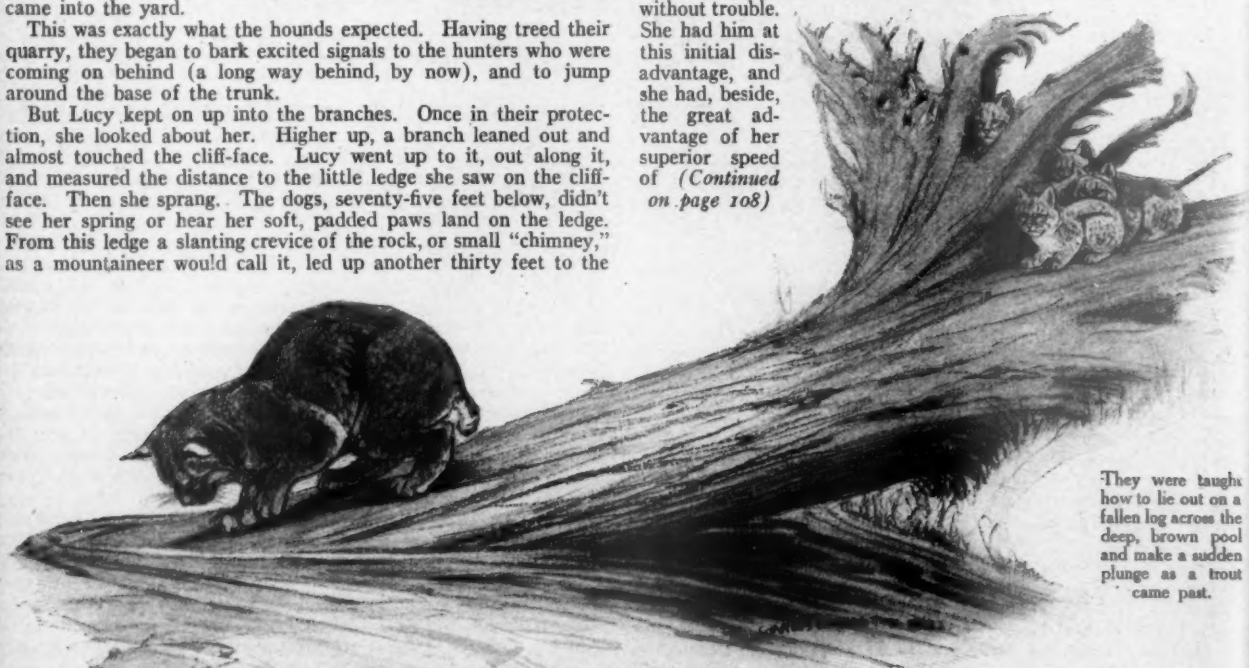
When the hunters came, they found the dogs still baying the tree. But there was no wildcat in the branches. After a while they worked around to the top of the cliff, and found out how she escaped. But it was too late to put the dogs on the trail again. They were a dozen miles from home, with a mountain between.

After that, Lucy was a famous character.

**B** EING a famous character has its penalties, especially when you've one toe missing and nobody can mistake your tracks. It was that missing toe which betrayed to Solon Littleton the fact that it was Lucy who came into his chicken-yard and killed two of his pet Rhode Island Reds. That was in February, after two weeks of tremendous cold and heavy snow. Lucy was desperately hungry. Solon had a dog, too, but the dog was sleeping inside. As soon in the morning as the theft was discovered, however, Solon put the dog on the tracks, and told him to go to it. It was a big hound dog, which had probably started out in life to be a fox-hound but had changed its mind too late for a really successful outcome, and tried to be a pointer—or a bulldog. (The matter was always in dispute between Solon and his neighbors.) The hound started off on the tracks, but Solon delayed following till his wife had given him his coffee and doughnuts (the latter broken by Solon meditatively, and the pieces dipped into the former, before eating).

Meanwhile Lucy was not a great way off—perhaps half a mile down in the swamp pines, finishing up her own breakfast and raising a mighty purr of thanksgiving therefor. The baying of one hound didn't greatly disturb her, and she let him get rather near before she started up. But she had reckoned without due consideration of the depth of the snow and the superior length of this dog's legs. She got across the road all right, on her way to the mountain cliffs (her instinctive refuge), but before she could make the woods above the high pasture, she realized that the dog would be up to her. There was no available tree—only a big cleft boulder overhung with a wild grape-vine. It was a case of having to fight, and she dived under the grape-vine, into the cleft of the rock, where she turned at bay and waited her pursuer.

The dog came crashing and baying in under the vine, and instantly Lucy was on his back. There was hardly room in that restricted cleft for him to turn around, though Lucy could double herself in it without trouble. She had him at this initial disadvantage, and she had, beside, the great advantage of her superior speed of (Continued on page 108)



They were taught how to lie out on a fallen log across the deep, brown pool and make a sudden plunge as a trout came past.



Oswald said disapprovingly: "Haf makes me sick. Always chasing some chorus-girl. He'd better cut 'em out and get married."

## PRETTY WOMEN

By

IDA M. EVANS

Illustrated by  
CHARLES D. MITCHELL

**A**MONG American bourgeois and proletariat alike there exists a deep-rooted and widespread impression that all scions of wealth, tainted or as decently earned as a farmer's flivver, are cold-blooded philanderers, walking from silk-lined cradle to rosewood-coffined grave a pathway cluttered thick with more or less unmentionable *affaires de cœur*, all their waking minutes spent in pursuing woman or being pursued—lovely woman if it so happen, unlovely woman if none lovely be around.

And where there is much smoke, there of course is to be found a portion of fire; a natural law will not be gainsaid. But in the case of one Oswald Greenman, the ordinary-featured, light-complexioned, mild-mannered though carefully and correctly garbed son of old Catharine Greenman—whose name, in spite of her immigrant introduction to America, was one mentioned respectfully by jobbers, boards of trade, income-tax collectors and her wholesale millinery competitors—in the case of Oswald, any such impression was wrong.

It may have been a certain inherent dullness in the young man, a lack of desire to grasp opportunities that floated his way. It may have been that no opportunities floated; Opportunity is an active old lady, but she can't serve every one in this crowded world. It may have

been that, having plenty of money, he found many entertaining ways of passing his young days so fast that girls and women were not quick enough to get his attention.

At any rate, his preparatory days were marked by nothing feminine more important than a small dough-faced girl, sister of a friend, who annoyed him bitterly with her requests for candy—he always had a pocketful of the highest-priced. His Harvard years had four mild flirtations, one for each year. But the first girl jilted him for a fellow more bent on matrimony; the second was an oldish college widow whom his fellow sophomores guyed him for succumbing to, and so he sheepishly quit succumbing; the third was a pale little pinched-nosed beauty who asked him too pointedly the size of his business mother's yearly income; the fourth was a chorus-girl whom he knew for just one evening.



None of the four disturbed his life more than a leaf disturbs the stream into which it falls.

After Harvard he—and his mother—had expected that he would place himself under her great business wing and learn how to take good care of the wholesale-millinery house which she had built up out of his dead father's small establishment. But along came the Great War. Young Oswald Greenman connected immediately with an Eastern training camp. While at that camp he was noted for the several thousand dollars that his lieutenant's outfit cost him, but he did not afterward confide to anyone that it had dazzled any feminine eyes; his training-camp reminiscences proved to be more testy than sentimental.

When the war abruptly ended and he came home, he hardly had time to assimilate two things—that his clever old mother's small army of employees did not seem especially impressed with his natural acumen, and that his mother's chief catalogue-artist, Annemay Doppy, had extraordinarily bright bronze-brown hair and an extraordinary pair of gray-and-violet eyes—when his mother died.

Possibly in training camp a certain sense of tactics in a crisis had been implanted in the young man. Oswald Greenman dexterously solved the problem of being an employer whose employees did not respect and so did not pull with, to the good of themselves and the business: he made most of them co-employers with himself. It was done very simply: he turned over part of his inherited stock to them, insuring their loyalty and arousing their admiration.

Then he married pretty Annemay, who had decided that he was worth a great deal of her admiration for this sudden praiseworthy action. And having married her, the young man calmly believed that life hereafter for him was to be a nicely smooth proposition, a pleasant proposition—barring, of course, disease, accident or sudden death. But being a normal young man, he did not expect any of the three to visit him or his precipitately.

SO, reading in his paper of a lively incident, consisting of a fast ride along the lake shore and a fine from an irritated judge for the same—this happening to Haff Meadows, a blond, plump young man who had been a friend of Oswald Greenman's preparatory, Harvard and training-camp days as well,—Oswald looked across the white napery, iced grapefruit and hot coffee of his pleasant mahogany-furnished breakfast-room and said disapprovingly to his pretty, bright-haired wife of four months:

"Haff makes me sick. Always chasing some chorus-girl who won't ride in any car that isn't breaking the speed-laws. He'd better cut 'em all out"—virtuously—"and get married to some nice girl and live right."

"Oh!" Annemay Greenman, *née* Doppy, laughed, thereby showing prettier teeth than she had ever sketched in a feminine face for the Greenman millinery semiannual catalogue. "Maybe your friend Haff doesn't want to marry. And why so strong in judgment? You've likely often helped him chase— After all, Oswald, now that I think of it, you've never told me much about your former love-affairs."

"Why, I never had any," quickly and truthfully he explained. "You were the first girl I ever went after, Annemay. That's straight goods."

He said it in the matter-of-fact manner which the truth called for. And thinking the assertion of little importance, he carelessly transferred his eyes from the midnight ride and morning-after fine to the column adjoining, which described some of the Czech-Slavs' latest internal cramps.

But between column and column his eyes caught the brief yet long speculative glance that his pretty-eyed wife of four months gave him. It was a glance that—

The prettiest girl with the most bronze-bright hair and the duskiest violet eyes, cannot apply herself steadily for several years to work that demands thought and concentration without showing the effect of such application and years. Annemay Doppy had once told young Oswald Greenman that getting out a wholesale-millinery catalogue, with its printers' objections, imports, prices, time-limits, glossary, artistry, facts, fancies and catch-the-gaze promises, was a devious and exacting piece of work beside which creating a league of nations was a small and trifling affair.

Somewhere in those exacting and steady years she had learned therefore to give a long yet brief speculative glance, such as she now gave her husband.

OVER the Czech-Slavs, Oswald Greenman could not forget that glance. Now, what did Annemay mean by it? It did not intimate disbelief. No, he was sure of that. But—but it somehow reminded him of some other glance of the same kind. He folded his newspaper absently and glanced oddly at

Annemay; but by that time she was engrossed with the maid, who had come into the room with more toast.

She smiled at him as usual when he rose to get into his overcoat. She kissed him as usual, twice—no mere pecks, either. Still—

Oswald frowned thoughtfully as he rode downtown. And frowning in continued thought, on the downtown way, he recalled abruptly another occasion when Annemay had given that same sort of look—not to him; and she wasn't married to him then; and he and she hadn't been talking about his past love-affairs. In fact, Annemay hadn't been talking to him at all, but to Mme. Rennie of the Greenman wholesale-house's dress-hat department. Mme. Rennie had held a hat in her long, supple white hands, a medium-sized blue hat. "And it looks like a hat that would sell fast," pettishly said Mme. Rennie. "But it don't. No one seems to—to care for it." Annemay had thoughtfully observed that every once in a while a hat was that sort, and gave it a brief yet long speculative glance, the same sort of glance that this morning—

Having parked his car, Oswald Greenman walked slowly across the way to his place of business. And passing a shop-window, he involuntarily paused and examined his clear reflection in it. It was the well-garbed reflection of a slight-built young man whose chin was too sharp to be shapely, whose eyes hesitated uncertainly between brown and hazel, and whose hair was an ordinary medium brown. He frowned; it was not a frown of wounded vanity. Still— As he, hard in thought, took very slow steps over the crossing which lay between this shop-window and the plate-glass front doors of the sixteen-story Greenman wholesale-house, a crossing policeman bawled at him: "Say, you! Move on—move on! Find some other place to dream dreams besides a crossing."

THERE was a decided lack of respect in the man's manner. Oswald Greenman reddened. And it was a sulky red, though the murmur that accompanied it and seemed to borrow sulkiness from it was not wholly concerned with the officer. "Darn it all," murmured the young man, "I never pretended to be a dazzling thing—to crossing cops or women. But that man needn't have looked at me as though I were an errand boy. And— and Annemay needn't have looked at me that way. But"—bitter and puzzled—"women are certainly queer. They pretend to prefer a man who never loved anyone but them—and then they hardly ever prefer that kind of man!"

Whereupon he so huffily dictated letters that morning to Anna Deneen, his secretary, who had been his late mother's, that that oldish, gray-pompadoured young woman was quite huffed, and considered resigning. Later he took so moody a view of the dilly-dallying post-war reconstruction of trade that Helbling, manager of the Greenman straw-department, called up the secretary of the State Commercial Association to see if anything serious in the way of strike or riot was on the way. And even late in the afternoon discomfort of mood still gripped Oswald Greenman when his friend Haff Meadows breezed in to see him.

If Oswald Greenman hadn't been so absorbed in his own discomfort of thought, he at once might have detected something peculiar in the way that plump, blond young friend of his school, college and training-camp days cast a glance over the office and its furnishings, including oldish Anna Deneen and her typewriter. It was as peculiar, that glance, as Annemay's had been.

"Say, Os," commented Haff at the same time, "you certainly look like you're doing something in this world—big littered desk, clicking typewriter and so forth." It was spoken in a way unlike Haff Meadows' usual glib style. It came slowly, earnestly.

"Indeed?" said Oswald without much interest.

"I'll say so. And—it makes me feel not worth much."

At this confession Oswald Greenman exhibited a surprise which was followed readily by some complacency. "That so?" Time had not been long back when Haff Meadows had stared long and grinningly when Oswald Greenman had announced his intention of running the business left him at the sudden death of his clever old mother, and Haff had said cuttingly: "Os, son, you're never the one to do it. Sell, bank and live on your coupons. That's the only safe course for a chap like you." Having not sold, banked or gone about living on any coupons, Oswald now not unnaturally felt some elation that the other had come round to admit his error. For the time being, some troublesome thoughts having to do with Annemay were forgotten.

"Glad to hear you say so, Haff."

Haff, who had taken a comfortable chair, leaned back in it, lighted a cigarette, stuck his two plump white thumbs in his vest pockets and went on:



Miss Grinchley laid her cards on the table. "Mr. Greenman, would you like your wife—I bear you're very fond of her—to know that you have lunched with me three times?"

"And it's just occurred to me, Os, that if you could step in and keep this establishment running all right, maybe I've underestimated my own ability too. Guess I ought to be able to do something toward steering myself toward a prosperous middle age!"

His friend assented to this praiseworthy assertion with a civil nod, though beginning to feel a trifle bored. At preparatory schools, at Harvard and at training camp, various elderly observers had taken pains to predict that plump, blond Haff Meadows was one of the things that made thinking men doubt the intelligence of a Creator—though Haff, until his poor old father went bankrupt recently, had made away with many dollars, he had never, so far, added any to the earned increment of a perspiring world.

"You've set me to thinking, Os," he now surprisingly went on.

"Well—I'm glad to hear that, Haff!"

"Yes. And—I don't know if I've told you that I'm thinking of getting married?"

"No, you haven't. Glad to hear that, Haff! Only life there is!"—with the loyalty of a satisfied benedict.

"I think so too. And if I don't marry Luella, she's liable to marry some one else any old day."

"Luella?"

"Girl I once told you about—in the Lou-Lou revue chorus. Beauty, Luella is. Taking all in all,"—young Mr. Meadows' tone was calm but judicial,—"*I don't know as the Lord, if he made a special job of it, could produce a more perfect specimen than Luella Goldwell.*"

For plump, blond Haff, who had gone through college with what one professor described as less vocabulary and more slang than belonged to any other man who unworthily ever stepped under the classic portals, this was a long and astonishing speech. Oswald Greenman's eyes widened—and turned a little toward the frame on his desk which contained the pretty picture of his own Annemay. However, he did not start any argument with his friend, who continued:

"Of course, I know I can never support Luella as she ought to be supported. She deserves"—musingly—"all the luxury that ever woman had."

"Guess you'll have to go to work, then, Haff," grinned Oswald. "Silk stockings cost, these days."

"You said it, Os," to his surprise his friend returned with feeling. "I've got to go to work. And I *want* to work—for my Luella. I'm right out now to trail a job, stalk a job, accumulate a job!" He beamed.

"Well, I wish you all luck," said Oswald Greenman innocently.

"Thank you, Os!" Into Haff Meadows' beaming smile there instantly flashed a great gratitude. And even in the inception of that flash there came a premonition to his hearer.

"Oh, thank you, old man," declared Haff. "I knew—I knew you'd never go back on a friend. I knew you were the only person I needed to call on. Just last night, Os, old man, I was recalling all our old days together, boyhood days, college days—"

"Oh, you—you were?" Oswald Greenman moved his chair a cold inch away from his friend's. Surely Haff Meadows wasn't going to ask him—

But Haff was. Beamingly, assuredly, he put, not the question, but the statement:

"Just you give me a job, Os. I said to myself, and I said to Luella, no need to worry. Os will wedge me in among his high-salaried managers or salesmen. Ten thousand a year at least. That's all. Of course, if your mother was alive, Os, I don't know as I'd care to connect up with this house, meaning no offense to you or disrespect to her. But she had a reputation for certainly making folks work."

OSWALD GREENMAN passed over this stricture on his clever old parent then lying under a marble shaft in Rosehill. He hardly heard it; he was aghast at his friend's request—no, hardly request; *assurance* was the better word.

He blurted: "But Haff, you know that this concern no longer belongs solely to me. When I learned, and darned quick, that I didn't have the experience or brains to run it, I put it on a cooperative basis. I couldn't give you the job without consulting many men."

Haff was taken back. "But you own half the stock yet?"

"Yes—fifty-one per cent, in fact, including Annemay's. She was an employee at the time, and so—"

"Well, I guess a fifty-one-per-center can give an old friend a pay-roll place in spite of any double-barreled cooperation! Which, by the way, if you'll pardon me, Os, for speaking plainly, was a very foolish move on your part. Quixotic—imbecile, rather!"

I'll bet you and I together could have run it fine and held on to the whole works."

"Maybe," said Os shortly. "But I did what I thought was best, and I still think it best, as the business is running smoothly, every man, woman and girl interested and pulling hard."

"Glad of that," put in the other comfortably. "I'd rather be connected with a business that's running smoothly than one that's grunting uphill. I want to know a salary will be steady, not occasional."

"But Haff—"

"There's this point," went on Haff: "though I said I don't altogether approve of this cooperative thingamajig, still, it suits me too. For I won't have to consider that my salary is coming altogether out of your pockets, my boy, and so there needn't be any question of master and man to mar our old boyhood friendship, Os."

Oswald seized upon this speech for the opening it gave.

"But you see, Haff, that's the point. It won't be out of my pocket solely, or I'd give you a job in a minute. It's out of the other men's too. And I have to consult them."

"Consult 'em. I don't mind that little red tape."

"But—but—"

"You've certainly got the power to hire one man in your own place of business?" demanded Haff, showing the birth of offense.

"In a way, yes. But we held a mass-meeting, and every one of us agreed faithfully to do nothing against the others' interests to submit everything to discussion and common agreement."

"You're sort of insinuating," said Haff in surprise and in coldness, "that hiring me will be against the best interests of—"

FOR a moment Oswald Greenman hesitated. But just at that moment Helbling, of the straw department, passed the open door. He was a fat, stooped man, shirt-sleeved. Haff Meadows could not know that once that stooped, prosaic person had said to young, dapper Oswald Greenman: "Young man, not many would have done what you've done. Believe me, there's some of us older men aint going to give anyone a chance to say you blundered. We'll act for your interests—as you've acted for ours this day."

Now, as Helbling passed by, Oswald Greenman's hesitation vanished. He eyed Haff stubbornly and said flatly: "Well, you wouldn't be for a house's best interests. Think it over, Haff. You're no salesman. And you don't know enough about the millinery business to manage a department."

"I'm not a baby," snapped Haff, whose face was turning scarlet. "I could pick up the details. And if you're really refusing your old boyhood—"

"I can't help it, Haff."

"Can't you? Well, I must say, Os, I'm surprised. If I'd been a hog and tried to stick you for a fancy salary— But you know for yourself ten thousand dollars isn't a lot! Any man's time is worth that much, whether he works or not. But Luella and I figured out we could live on it—"

"You ought to," muttered Oswald. "Annemay and I are living on eight. Annemay says she isn't going to spend more while We Side babies—"

"Mrs. Greenman and Luella may not have the same tastes," coldly retorted Haff, rising. "Well, one lives and learns. I've learned that friendship isn't—"

"Haff,"—pleadingly,—"*honest, if I alone was concerned, I'd slap your name onto my pay-roll so quick—*"

"Never mind."

"But Haff—"

"Never mind!"—haughtily walking out.

"Want a loan?" begged the other. "Say, Haff, let me lend you enough to start you in some business of your own; I'll be glad to—"

"Never mind," snapped the plump, blond Haff, stalking haughtily down the corridor. "Luella distinctly told me to get a job, not a loan."

Oswald Greenman might have thought over this last sentence and obtained a light on the nature of the home life soon to be enjoyed by his old friend. But he was so irritated by the affable and the stern necessity he felt for refusing Haff, who had been dispensed with by the Harvard faculty for refusing to study and by a training camp for refusing to drill, that he at once made every effort to put the entire incident out of his mind.

The afternoon was over, anyway, and dinner and Annemay were next on the program.

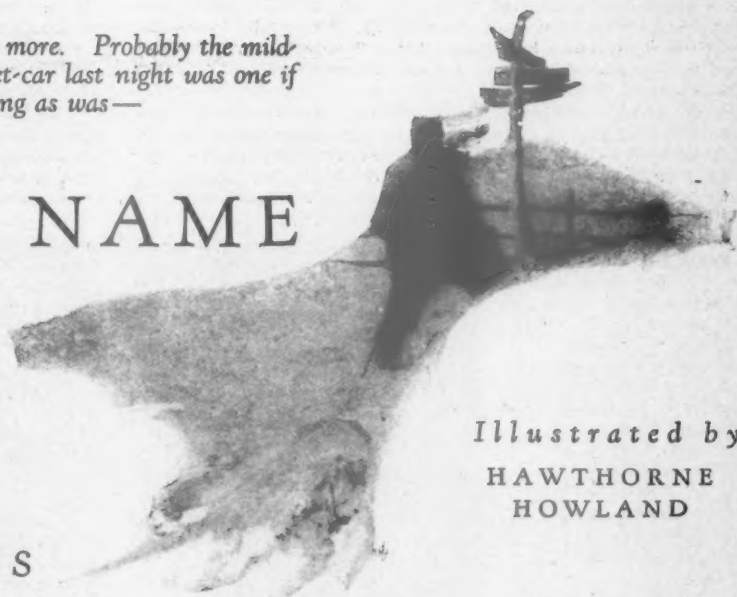
And it may be that the word *friendship* did not mean all Oswald Greenman that it means to some (Continued on page 19)



YOU don't have to search for heroes any more. Probably the mild-appearing man across from you in the street-car last night was one if you only knew. The best of them are unsung as was—

# A MAN BY NAME O' CHAMPLIN

By CHARLES  
WESLEY SANDERS



Illustrated by  
HAWTHORNE  
HOWLAND

NO one but the waitress was in Mrs. Maloney's restaurant beside the railroad tracks. She had gathered up the dishes from which the last train-crew had eaten and had borne them to the kitchen in the rear, where Mrs. Maloney herself was now washing them.

The girl was red-haired, with an intensely white face, save for a kind of breathing color in her cheeks. It was a temperamental color. Sometimes it stood in her cheeks steadily for many minutes. Again it receded with sudden violence. Sometimes it rushed back. Again it crept back with fluttering timidity.

The girl's eyes had that changeable quality, too. Sometimes they seemed to drowse. Again they were wide-open, eager. Sometimes they flashed fire. Again they burned steadily with a flame that could sear if a man grew bold.

Her name was Estelle—Estelle Kemp. Trainmen called her Miss Kemp. When she had first come to the restaurant, one or two had essayed "Estelle." Only one had attempted the closer familiarity of "Stella." On the first occasions Estelle's eyes had flashed; on the last they had burned with that searing flame.

At that time—in the late eighties—it was more difficult for a girl to command respectful address from the rank and file of railroad men than it is now. They were a rougher lot. The flowing bowl was denied them by rule, but the rule was honored more in the breach than the observance. Also, there was a class which has now almost disappeared; that was the "boomer," the man who worked only long enough to get a sense of direction, the restless wanderer, homeless by choice, always on the move.

Boomers were a menace to a girl like Estelle. She had learned that quickly. She hated them as a class and as individuals, with a hate as vivid as the color in her cheeks or her flaming hair. She thought that some fine day she might kill one of them; for without knowing it, Estelle was an extremist; she had never stood on neutral ground.

It was raining outside to-night, a violent, dashing autumnal rain. The wind rattled the triangular metal sign in front of the restaurant; the rain flooded against the windows; and there the wind whined and sobbed as if it sought escape from the elements of which it was a part. As Estelle walked toward the front of the restaurant, she observed that there was a trickle of water beneath the door. She had a housewifely instinct, undeveloped as yet, and she picked up a broom which stood behind the door. She swept the trickle back, and with a flirt of the broom sprayed the water beneath the crack out on the step.

She was about to replace the broom when she stopped, her attention arrested by the sight of a man's face pressed against the pane at her right. It was a reddened, hardened face, guiltless of beard, though chin and upper lip were black where a beard was ready to start after a very recent shaving. It was a big face, with broad flat cheeks spreading away from a wide-nostriled, prominent nose. The mouth was wide, but it was only a straight line now, upper and lower lips being clamped together, as if, as Estelle

guessed, the man's teeth were locked. She guessed that the more because of the look in the man's eyes. Those eyes were wide open, blue like very clean ice, and as cold as ice. That figure of speech was Estelle's, and it made her shiver unaccountably. No other man, so far as she could recall, had ever made her shiver.

She was glad when the face disappeared from the window, but she was more interested than frightened when it appeared beyond the glass in the door. With more gentleness than Estelle had expected, the door was opened. She stepped back in amazement at the size of the man who appeared in the doorway. She had thought the face at the window a big face, but she saw now that it was only in keeping with the man's body. He was not molded on graceful lines. All of him was huge; his shoulders were broad, and his chest was deep; but these did not narrow down to slender flanks and legs—he dropped straight from shoulder to hip, and his legs were like telegraph-poles. Strength, Estelle saw, was what he had in astounding abundance. Of beauty he had none, except strength's own sheer rough beauty.

Estelle's eyes flitted from her brief scrutiny of him to a closer scrutiny of his clothing. Usually she could place a man by his clothing, but she could not place this man. He wore leather boots into which trousers of heavy brown corduroy were tucked. A mackinaw which had blues and browns and reds in it was drawn up about his throat. The peak of a heavy fur cap was thrust back from his eyes. Estelle, who was imaginative, had a notion that those eyes scorned protection. They seemed to say for themselves that they wished to see what was going on.

Now they swept the restaurant in one comprehensive glance before they came to rest on Estelle's face. When they did so come to rest, they remained there with a steadiness, a searching inquiry, which in spite of herself brought the blood flooding into Estelle's cheeks. She was quite pretty then, alive like some flaming flower, a sight that had set many a man's pulses to hammering or to fluttering, according to the kind of man he was.

But the icy look remained in the stranger's eyes. It baffled and nettled Estelle. She would have been quick to resent any dawning appreciation in the man's regard of her, and yet his cold unconsciousness of her provoked her queerly.

"There's nobody here, eh?" the man said at last.

Estelle had an impulse to be flippant, though she had always told herself that she must never be flippant with men. That would be laying aside her armor. She had never yet laid aside her armor—but this man was different. He was so aloof, so remote, so absorbed in himself, in what was occupying his mind.

"Why, I'm here, and you're here."

That was what Estelle had an impulse to say. What she did say was:

"There's nobody here."

The stranger took off his cap and shook the water from it. Estelle was astonished to see that his close-cut hair was black as jet. That color served to emphasize the blueness of his eyes.

For a moment the man stood with his cap in his hand, his eyes bent on the floor. Then he suddenly raised his eyes. Estelle had much the same feeling that she would have had if he had swiftly stepped close to her. He was no longer aloof. Eagerness had replaced that cold look in his eyes. Estelle felt as a bug placed under a microscope must feel, except that the stranger seemed to be reading her soul instead of her physical aspects.

At last he sighed. "I want to ask you somethin'," he said in a low voice. "I hope you'll tell me the truth."

The intense earnestness of his manner communicated itself to Estelle. She wanted to hear his questions, because he could not question her without revealing something about himself. Her curiosity was so great that she did not wonder that she was curious.

"What do you want to know?" she asked.

He did not ask her anything. He made a statement, the import of which Estelle had to be quick-witted to catch. He seemed to have made that statement so often that he believed a fragment of it would enable anyone to piece out the whole.

"He's a man that'd stand up above my shoulder, near as big as me other ways, a hammer-head, got a scar on his right cheek where a knife sometime ripped him, sticks his head out a-front of him when he walks, bow-legged some, dressed like me, mebber, dirty mostly. . . . You'd remember him, miss, if he come in here and you alone."

It seemed to Estelle as if there was a burst of song in her heart. She remembered the man—bitterly. She was now standing almost on the very spot on which she had stood when he had reached out an unwashed hand and laid it on her arm. The searing look in her eyes had been accompanied by violent words on that occasion. The man had slunk away before the torrent of her righteous young wrath.

Something of this, or all of it perhaps, must have been written in her expressive face, for the big man before her took a deep breath and then exhaled slowly, quite as if he had suddenly been relieved of a physical strain. Estelle saw his big body relax.

"He goes by the name of Jack Smith," she said. "He—"

The big man waved her words aside with a great hand.

"No need to tell me what he done," he said. "Just tell me where he is."

"He was here an hour ago," said Estelle.

"Workin' on the railroad?"

"Flagman."

"When will he be back?"

"To-morrow night, probably."

The man took off his mackinaw, and stepping across the room, hung it and his cap on a peg.

"I'm hungry," he said. "I aint paid as much attention to my eating as I should. Please bring me plenty of meat, potatoes and bread. While it's cookin', you set here beyond me."

Estelle had never yet "set beyond" a patron of the restaurant, but when she had transmitted the man's orders to the kitchen, she sank down across from him. It may have been the prospect of abundant food, or a subtler feeling which brought a gentler look into the man's eyes; at any event the ice in them had melted.

Estelle felt her bosom grow warm as she looked at him. Estelle cast about for a reason for that, and found it in two words:

"He's clean!"

It was delightful to Estelle to be in the presence of a man like that. She relaxed, sank back in her chair, watched him from lidded eyes. She was not yet fascinated by him, but she was ready to yield to fascination if it came.

"What's your name, please?" the man asked.

"Estelle," she answered, and did not seem to realize that she thus proffered to him the right to address her with a familiarity which she had denied to others.

"Mine is Champlin," he said. "I see I can trust you, Estelle. I always got to make sum whether I can trust folks or not. . . . This man's name is Lanson. He aint got no more brains than to take the name of Smith. Pah! Well, him and me and Joe Daggett worked in the Michigan mines."

"Coal mines?" asked Estelle, chin in both hands.

"Ore-mines. Worked there all our lives with the Cousin Jacks—Decent folks, them. Lanson and Daggett, them two had a quarrel. Gosh, Daggett wa'n't no bigger a man than you are a woman, but he licked Lanson somethin' terrible. Bloodied him and bruised him till he couldn't see nor stand up."

"Up there when a fight's done, it's generally done. Men shake hands and forget it. If they *should* come together again, it out in the open, when the licked man has got his second wind. Lots of them don't know when they're licked. Well, not a Lanson. He killed my friend Joe Daggett."

Upon that statement Champlin immediately withdrew into himself. Estelle saw that he was picturing anew the death of his friend at Lanson's hands. She supposed he had framed the mental pictures for himself a great many times. She did not speak, and he came out of his contemplation suddenly.

"They went down into the mine together in the morning," he went on. "Only Lanson come out. We went looking for him without no questions being asked. We found him. He was dead with his head bashed in. There was ore scattered about, but he careful. Nobody said nothing. They all left the matter to me. I went huntin' for Lanson, but he had flew the coop. I been huntin' for him for nigh onto a year now."



"No need to tell me what he done," said Champlin. "Just tell me where he is."

He paused, and a question leaped to Estelle's lips. Before she could put it to him, Mrs. Maloney announced that his food was ready. Estelle served it. Champlin abandoned himself to its consumption as if he had not eaten to his satisfaction for many days. At last he pushed back the dishes and put his elbows on the table. He interlaced his big fingers and rested his heavy chin on the backs of them.

"What'll you do when you find Lanson?" Estelle asked.

Champlin's red blood came up into his neck, flowed to his cheeks, mounted clear to his black hair. The glacial look in his eyes was replaced by one as hot as flame itself. It was no dancing flame of madness, but the steady heat of an unquenchable hate.

"I'll kill him," he said in a voice which had a strangely still quality. "Kill him slow and sure. Choke him to death, most likely. Make him know and feel he's dyin' by inches."

His statement struck no horror to Estelle's heart. The night Lanson had laid his hand upon her, she would have killed him herself if she had had the strength.

But she caught a meaning of her own from what Champlin said.

"You stick to your friends, don't you?" she asked. "I guess you'd keep on going for the rest of your life, if it was necessary, to get Lanson in the end."

And from her praise of him, Champlin plucked an emotion which was doubtless new to him. He unlaced his fingers, reached over and laid a hand on her arm. She did not withdraw as she had withdrawn from Lanson and from other men.

"You're a good girl, too," he said. "You'd back a man up in a thing like this."

"Lanson got familiar with me one night," Estelle said to him.

Champlin sat staring at her, his hand still on her arm. A new interest was being born in him, the first genuinely new interest that had come to him since he had set out in pursuit of the man who had killed his friend. He felt that somehow this girl and himself were of a kind. She was stronger than her slender body suggested. She had not quailed before his dire threat. Indeed she had abetted him, urged him on. There was a woman for you!

But as his interest in her reached its peak, it suddenly toppled down. He had sworn he would be revenged for the death of Joe Daggett. Nothing, he had declared to himself, should turn him aside. So far he had traveled a straight path. He must not permit himself to be diverted here at the end of the trail. He must not let her wrongs become confused with the deadly wrong Lanson had done to Daggett.

And yet she was so very magnetic. He stirred uneasily in his chair and removed his hand from her arm.

"I'll see you to-morrow," he said, rising abruptly. "Can you find out just when Lanson's train will be along?"

"Easy," she answered. "All I've got to do is to phone over to the telegraph-office. The operator will find out for me."

"Who's this operator?" Champlin demanded.

"Why," said Estelle, confused by the swift luminosity which had come to his eyes, "he's—he's just the operator over at the coal-dock."

"Oh!" said Champlin; and he paid his bill and left.

For the first five minutes after his departure, neither of them was capable of straight thinking. Champlin was worried lest he had done the dead Daggett an injustice by letting his feeling for the girl shake his single intention for even a moment.

Estelle forgot all about Daggett. She thought only of Champlin in a confused, sweet recollection of him.

She was still thinking of him in that way when he came into the restaurant the next night. She gave him a rosy, level-eyed look. Though a bitterly cold rain was still falling, she noticed that his mackinaw was open. As she looked at him, he ran his finger around inside the collar of his rough blue shirt.

She expected his first question would be as to the whereabouts of Lanson's train, but it was not.

"Well, say," he said in a low voice whose tenseness surprised her, "I thought I'd be down here for my supper, but you don't know what a nice place I got into. I went up the street looking for a place to sleep, and I couldn't find no place, and I come along to a house where the lights was shinin' through the windows. I could see the folks inside, a man and a woman and a little girl.

"I guess I didn't tell you about Joe Daggett's home, did I? I think, as I look back, that one reason why I cottoned to him so strong was that he had a home. Me, I've never had a home since I can remember. I used to go up to Joe's every Saturday night for supper. His mother was the nicest old lady you ever met. One of these here kind women. She didn't distinguish none between Joe and me. She used to treat me just like I was her own son on these Saturday nights, always having somethin' extra for supper, and in winter a big fire goin'. We'd sit and talk. . . . She'd tell stories about the old days in Michigan when there was deer and bears up there. . . . I always thought that it was her influence that made Joe the quiet, gentle kind of man he was. . . . He wouldn't of got into this fuss with Lanson, only Lanson called him a name no man could stand for. . . . When Joe got roused, he went after his man fast and sudden. But he always felt sorry about it afterward."

He paused and tried to smile.

"Aint I ramblin' in my mind, though?" he said.

"Go on," said Estelle rather breathlessly.

"I knocked on the door of this here house up the street and told them how I was fixed, and could I sleep there all night?" he pursued. "Well, they said to come right in, and they sure made me to home. This lad runs a meat-market downtown, and I went down there with him this morning and hung around all day. Tonight I went home with him again, and we had supper, and me and the kid played together. . . . Seemed just like them Saturday nights at Joe's. . . . Say, how soon's Lanson's train going to pull in?"

Estelle had sat relaxed, fascinated. Her home was a dull, bare room above the restaurant. Now she took up the telephone and put the receiver to her ear.

"It'll be here in fifteen minutes," she said as she put the telephone down. "It will go in on the siding for a passenger-train. Be here for twenty minutes anyhow."

"Lanson will be goin' back with his flag while they get into clear," he said.

"And he'll come along the track toward the train in the rain and the dark," she said.

"Alone," the man added.

"Alone," Estelle agreed.

Champlin threw up his head and shook his big shoulders. She saw him attempt to force that icy look back into his eyes. But he could not do it. Something in his soul, some rekindled white flame, had melted that ice.

"I'll be going," he said.

He turned to the door.

"Button up your coat against the rain," Estelle ordered.

He obeyed without a word and passed out of the room. As he

Estelle had thrown the front door wide and was leaning out, peering.

went along the sidewalk in front of the window, he glanced inside. Estelle saw that there was a perplexed look in his eyes.

She sat down at one of the tables. From her place she could see the clock. When Champlin had left, it had been fifteen minutes past nine. Nine-thirty came, very slowly, it seemed to Estelle.



She rose and walked to the door. She opened it a little and stood listening, her vivid head bent. An eternity seemed to pass while she waited for the whistle of the engine on Lanson's train. When the whistle at last sounded, she started, and the color fled from her cheeks.

Mrs. Maloney came to the kitchen door. Estelle had thrown the front door wide and was leaning out, peering. She saw the engine creep past the road, saw the dark bulk of the train follow it for a dozen car-lengths and then come to a full stop.

"Shut the door," Mrs. Maloney cried. "You're freezin' the place."

Estelle turned about on her with a violent look in her dark eyes. Mrs. Maloney started back in astonishment. She seemed to think that Estelle was due for one of the outbreaks of temper which were not infrequent with her. But Estelle only darted past her, leaving the door open. Mrs. Maloney gazed after her without closing the door, while Estelle put on her hat and slipped into her rain-coat.

"Where are you goin'?" Mrs. Maloney demanded as Estelle ran back to the door.

"Out — away — down to the tracks."

She was gone before Mrs. Maloney could think of another question. Mrs. Maloney closed the door, muttering.

Estelle sped along the dark road as if she had borrowed the wings of the wet wind that was blowing. She came at length to the tracks. The train had been cut, and the engine had dragged the head-end forward, so that the crossing would not be blocked.

Estelle looked back toward the caboose. The green lights showed plainly through the rain. Beyond those she could see a red light. This was swinging in time to a man's step. She knew that Lanson was coming in with his flag. Champlin was not in sight.

Estelle ran along the rough right-of-way beside the train. It was very dark, and the rain whipped into her face. Her skirts beneath the rain-coat became wet and impeded her progress. Lanson reached the caboose, just before she did.

She stopped within three car-lengths of him. She saw him slip his lantern over his arm and put up a hand to reach the caboose hand-holds. Then a figure detached itself from the heavy shadows beside the caboose.

"Just a minute, Lanson," Estelle heard Champlin say.

Champlin's voice, as Estelle knew it would be, was very steady. She imagined that that icy look had come back into his eyes.

Lanson stopped, that one hand still upraised. He seemed incapable of changing his attitude. Estelle supposed that he had recognized Champlin, and that the recognition had sent a paralyzing fear through him.

"Come here," Champlin said.

He let fall a heavy hand upon Lanson's shoulder. Estelle saw Lanson dragged back. Then a horrid scream broke from Lanson's lips, such a scream as a man rarely utters.

Estelle ran forward. The door of the caboose was thrown open, and a man whom Estelle recognized as the conductor stepped out on the platform.

"What's going on down there?" he demanded.

The light of his white lantern shone down on the faces of the two men. Champlin's face was like stone. Lanson's writhed and twisted. Lanson's eyes protruded from their sockets.

Champlin lifted his graven face to the conductor.

"I'll have no interference here," he said. "This man insulted a girl I know, and I'm goin' to beat him up a few for doin' it."

The conductor seemed to have no intention of interfering. He seemed only curious. He hooked his lantern over his arm, grasped the hand-holds, and leaned down.

"Now, then, Lanson," Champlin said, "will you fight?"

But there was no fight in Lanson. He only stood shivering, with Champlin's heavy hand on his shoulder. Champlin stood staring down at him.

"I swore I'd kill you for murderin' my friend Joe Daggett, but—" Champlin began.

"Wait just a minute, Champlin," Lanson said in a voice so low that it reached Estelle as a whisper. "Don't you go chokin' me to

death. . . . I'll tell you about Daggett. . . . You know we had that scrap? Well, next day in the mine I took it up with him again, when we was alone for a minute. He told me to drop it to forget it. He said there wasn't no use in carrying it on. I thought he was afraid because we was there alone. I knowed afterwards that he wasn't. So I called him that name again, and smashed him one when he wasn't lookin' for it. You know he wasn't a man quick to anger. But when he did get mad, he got mad all through. Gen'ally he stuck by the law. That was one thing about him—he stuck by the law.

"Well, he heaved himself on top of me and got his hands by my throat. You know how it is with these here law-abidin' people. They're hell-benders if they get started. I was sure he was goin' to kill me. My hands went gropin' and I found a piece of ore with a sharp edge. I brought it up against his head, and his hold on my throat loosened. I let him have it again. I got free of him then and got to my feet. . . . He moved. I was scared stiff of him. . . . I found another piece of ore right by my feet, and I let him have that with all my stren'th. And he didn't move no more. . . . It was an honest-to-Gawd fight Champlin. . . . You let me go."

The conductor leaned down still further. "Neighbor," he said



"Now, then, Lanson," Champlin said, "will you fight?"

"With Campbell's fare so rich and rare  
Just give me a husky spoon  
Then every day will bloom like May  
And smile like sunny June."

## "I'm hungry for it!"

Yes, 1920 has an eager welcome ready for this favorite *Campbell's* kind.

Nourishing food at reasonable cost is the New Year's biggest problem. And no product in your larder gives you more practical help in solving it than

### Campbell's Vegetable Soup

It combines fifteen different vegetables beside barley, macaroni alphabets and a satisfying beef stock.

Enjoyed by everyone, rich in necessary strength-giving elements, this tempting soup is also one of the most economical foods you can buy.

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# Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

"you've got his confession. You don't want to go stickin' your head into a noose for the likes of him. He's no good. Anybody with half an eye can see that. I knew it the minute I laid eyes on him. Don't soil your hands with him."

**C**HAMPLIN did not answer in words. His free hand suddenly went up and came down on Lanson's mouth. It was a terrible blow. Lanson strangled, and Estelle knew that his lips had been split and that his blood was flowing into his mouth as he gasped for breath.

Estelle wanted to scream to Champlin to let him go. She did not care about Lanson, one way or the other. She did not care that he would be hurt—that he had already been hurt. But also she no longer desired revenge on him.

But she did not want Champlin, as the conductor had said, to put his neck in a noose on Lanson's account. She understood how much greater his danger was than Lanson's. But she could not scream. Champlin would do what he willed to do, in spite of her or anybody else.

Champlin struck Lanson on the mouth again. Lanson went to his knees, his face upturned. Champlin slapped his face with a hard, open palm. In the light from the conductor's lantern Estelle saw that Lanson's face was torn and bleeding. Suddenly his eyes went shut.

Champlin picked him up and tossed him onto the caboose platform, the conductor dodging to let the inert body pass him.

"Can I ride down some place with you where I can turn this lad over to the police?" Champlin said.

"He looks to me like he needed a doctor more'n a policeman," the conductor said. "But you can ride, mister, if you promise to keep the peace."

Champlin put up his hands to mount to the caboose platform. Estelle saw that he was not smiling at the conductor's jest.

Estelle, her warm blood a-flood in her face, sprang forward and called Champlin's name.

He turned slowly, as if he were incredulous of what his ears recorded. He dimly discerned Estelle, and strode up to her.

"You didn't kill him, did you?" she whispered.

"No," he said, his eyes on her flaming cheeks and her brilliant eyes. "I didn't kill him. Let me tell you: last night when I was in that meat-man's house, it come to me that Daggett wouldn't want him killed. Why, even he, dull as he is, and brutal, remembered Joe only as a law-abidin' man. And so Joe was. . . . And there was Joe's mother. She's all alone, and I was a kind of another son to her. She's been needin' me while she tended Joe's grave up there in the hard

Michigan country. I got to go back to her. I couldn't throw my freedom away, mebbe my life, while she was needin' me. It would of been too cruel to her, and Joe wouldn't never have forgave me. . . . So I'm going back."

Estelle was breathing fast. She put out an uncertain hand, and it fell on Champlin's corded arm. He took the hand in a sudden, hard grasp.

"You and me somehow struck fire last night," he said. "I want you. We'll have a home where we'll both be safe. . . . You know how you are, kind of willful. You get mad quick, like me. I'm goin' back to look after Mother Daggett while she lives. Lemme look after you too, Estelle."

"You need a little looking after yourself," Estelle said. . . . "Oh, I'm so glad, though, that you punished him for Joe Daggett's sake."

She could feel the swift expansion of the big chest she lay against.

"Sho!" said Champlin. "I didn't beat him for Joe's sake. I beat him for yours. I'd have beaten him for your sake if nine nooses had been danglin' over my head ready to drop on my neck. That's a different proposition, Estelle."

Estelle shivered, but warmly.

"Always keep me safe," she murmured. "Leave that to me," Champlin returned with lifted head.

## JOLANDA—V. V. V.

(Continued from page 38)

wholly reckless mood. For I've followed the rainbow to the end—and there was no pot of gold! Perhaps the loss of a tooth would sober me far more than graver disaster." She began humming in gay-sad fashion, smiling at Jolanda in a way that made the vampire novice yearn to get down and unbutton the little boots to prove her devotion.

"I really hate nothing more deadly than parsnips and shirtwaists," Mrs. Dedloff continued. "So your notions about me are oversubscribed. . . . You have a brother and sister and a home and parents—and a vampire over the way! So remember, when the home grows so stolid and respectable that you must find a vent, come slipping through the French windows; and if I'm driving—wait for me and read all the novels you like, try on my damn-gorgeous gowns and putter with my make-up box—I'll tell Marie to give you the keys of the city. And when I come in, we'll have tea and talk of everything that you want to talk about, and while you pretend we are sister vamps, I'm going to pretend you are mine! Funny? We'll drink to secrecy—so—secrecy, no matter what. And I don't think, when you're nearly half a century, —a lovely gray-haired thing in lavender tea-gowns,—that you'll be the worse for lending a breath of spring to just a tired old child." She kissed Jolanda, breathless little kisses on her cheeks, and Jolanda laid her sunny brown head on the blue velvet shoulder and halfway sobbed.

"Oh, darling—I'll die when you wont have me for tea. Nothing else could ever matter as much—nothing."

Mrs. Dedloff's gay, queer voice was say-

ing: "When the discussion as to the new parlor curtains or the reason Peter's shoes need half-soling so often becomes too vigorous—come and tell me all about it, and I'll repay you by describing Italian sunsets and Russian court receptions."

"I won't waste time telling grubby old things—"

"You must; that's your price of admission," Mrs. Dedloff retorted. "I'm keen to hear things too—your sort of things. When one marries from desperation and finds one has married a madman with millions to employ in making everyone as miserable as possible, and when you're a *chez-fence* person and no one helps you down from the fence onto green pastures—well, you end like I do, Jolanda—quite out of it all, and with cobwebby memories for your pains. But all this happened when you were not and I was only quite; so we wont discuss it further. Remember, you are mine—for at least two afternoons a week; and when I think it's harming you the least mite, I'll pull up stakes and go away."

"When you go away, I'll die," Jolanda said solemnly.

"And you must call me Violet."

**T**HREE weeks gave Hamilton time to view Mrs. Dedloff in the more startling of her costumes and her three automobiles, her electric cab, her touring-car and the French limousine. Yet only tradesmen had welcomed her to her old home; as yet no old schoolmate had sat in the Dedloff drawing-room to recall bygone times.

"A few have halfway batted an eye,"

Mrs. Dedloff told Jolanda during one of

their vampire teas, "but the majority have given me to understand that their ostracism reeks of the continous. But what care I as long as I've Jolanda?"

The Triangle Club had disbanded by common consent. Daphne McGrath had a redoubled interest in filling the cedar chest, and Gladys Patterson was bent on a course in classical dancing. Jolanda scarcely heeded the club disorganization; even the bromidic surroundings of her home were of minor importance, for by day she waited until tea-time came and after clever reconnoitering in the woods slipped through the hedge and found her way in the always open French windows of the Dedloff mansion. By night she dreamed her dreams of Mrs. Violet Dedloff and planned on the morrow's meeting.

Meanwhile the town Hamilton wondered how long this solitary, "awful" little person was to remain in its midst. As Jolanda's father had said, it was not convenient for Hamilton to have a home-grown vampire on its hands. Nor did said vampire try to bribe her way by charitable donations. She held herself as aloof from Hamilton as Hamilton had threatened to hold itself aloof from Mrs. Dedloff. The municipal curiosity was beginning to break under the strain; Hamilton was almost ready to ask Mrs. Dedloff questions. Added to the old rumors of Mrs. Dedloff's escapades and her husband's escapes from the sanitarium, his threats of murder and so on, was the present knowledge that her terrier Kumbac had three sets of harness and blankets as well as white rubbers, and Mrs. Dedloff had just purchased a miniature Chinese garden made of real jewels—the



"Last night down at the Central House a chap I know—on the road like me—was going back home to Richwood to his wife and kids. I thought I'd got over mooning about things long ago. But I hadn't, it seemed. Went at it again, harder than ever. I said to myself it had got to stop. I said maybe all these might-have-beens I was hanging onto would have turned out something wholly different than I thought. I told myself maybe if there'd have been children they'd have been forward, troublesome little imps. I says to myself: 'Now, maybe if you had a chance to go home over Sunday, there wouldn't be any peace for you there at all.'

"So I annexed the bright little idea of having that sort of a home for myself over Sunday—and remembering the experience the next time I got sloppy. It looked like a bright enough little idea. But you spoiled it."

"I? How?"

"Well, first place, last night when I got up here and found the place all lit up and cheerful, and fires going, and women's things and kids' things lying about,—just enough of 'em in just the right places,—and the supper all ready for me, one corking supper—"

"I didn't know."

"Of course you didn't. I'm not laying it up against you. You meant to be nice. You were—too darned nice. It got me—here." He put his hand to his throat.

He stooped to make easier the tousled little head on his knees.

"Then to-day again, bringing me these two kids; that went and spilled the beans again."

"You said you wanted a pair of troublesome young imps. Weren't they that?"

"The limit," he conceded. "They kept me on the go from the minute they got here until they went asleep about a half-hour ago."

"Then," she said, looking at him with a queer light in her eyes, "it must be your fault, not mine, that your scheme didn't work out."

"It is. They did their worst for me, but I liked it. God help me, I never had such a bully day in all my life."

Miss King looked as if she were dying to laugh and to cry at the same time. She did neither. She held her face politely expressionless.

"What'll we do about it?" said Sam after a long pause.

"We?"

"You wouldn't desert me now, would you, with things all up in the air like this?"

"What else can I do?"

"You might start in and nag me for a half-hour or so—tell me the place is a sight and that I'm a worse one, that I'd ought to be ashamed of myself disturbing the whole neighborhood getting crazy with the kids the way I have been doing all day. It's a sort of last-ditch stunt, but it might help some."

"Maybe you'd like that too," she said with a twinkle in her eyes.

"I'm afraid I should—from you."

She endeavored to pass this off with a grin of amusement, but it wasn't a complete success, because she suddenly reddened.

"I'll take the children home now," she said sharply.

"How much do I owe for the rent of 'em?"

"Nothing."

He pulled a bill from his pocket and passed it to her.

"Give this to the party that let me have 'em for the day."

"You're welcome to them for the day. They are my dead sister's children."

"You support 'em?"

"I try to."

"How is the real estate game here in Middleburg?"

"Fierce."

Sam's expression at the moment seemed to convey the impression that he was glad it was.

"Say, here we are, each with a problem," he said. "Let's pool 'em, and they won't be troubling us any more. I'll take a

lease of this house—no, I'll sell old man Crawford a new set of belting tomorrow, if I have to strangle him into taking it. Then I'll buy this place. We'll be married. That'll make a home for you and the kids. And Sundays I can come home to such a place as I came into here last night, and play all day with the kids—"

"Don't tempt me. I wouldn't want to do you an injustice."

"What injustice could you do me?"

"Marrying you just to make things easier for myself and these two children."

"Would that be any greater injustice than me marrying you for the sake of having every Sunday like this one?"

"Perhaps not. Still—"

"It's a give-and-take affair, any way you look at it, isn't it? Just as fair for one as for the other. Besides—I—I sha'n't be doing you any injustice at all," he added.

"Neither will I," she whispered.

There was a movement on the porch. George blinked at them sleepily.

"Aw, I seen it! I seen you kiss her!" he announced.

"Glad you did!" said Sam. . . .

Old Ed Burrage, who for years had audited the expense-accounts of H. B. Cole's road-force, came bustling into the third vice-president's office.

"Here's something queer on Sam Hood's expense-list," he said. "May 28. Home over Sunday." Sam was out in Middleburg May 28, and he couldn't

have come home and got back in time to sell that stuff Monday morning."

The third vice-president glanced up from certain specifications for a complete new belting system for the Crawford Car Wheel Works which Sam Hood had sent in.

"O. K. it and let it go," he said. "And say, Ed, while you're at it, tell him to go home every Sunday."



They don't look like what I want," said Sam doubtfully. "Wait!" she urged with a certain grimness.



HERE is another of those splendid stories of the wild life at the Edge of Civilization in the Berkshires. This time—

# LUCY— WILDCAT

By  
WALTER  
PRICHARD EATON

Illustrated by  
CHARLES LIVINGSTON BULL

LUCY was born with a price on her head. *Lucy* doesn't sound much like the name of a fugitive from justice, of a vicious character hunted for the legal reward. Nevertheless, *Lucy* is what she came to be called by all the countryside, no doubt just because *Lucy* is such a foolish name for a wildcat. *Lucy* is a nice name for the heroine of a poem by William Wordsworth, but as the Christian appellation for twenty-five pounds of gray-black and dirty white fur and muscle and claws roaming the rocky, precipitous slopes of one of the highest of the Berkshire Hills, seeking what it may devour, the name has sufficient incongruity to please the Yankee taste.

I hesitate a little to tell the entire story of *Lucy's* career, lest I be called a "nature-faker." It is all true, but those who raise the cry of nature-faking will never believe anything true about animals which goes contrary to what they themselves have seen, or the way in which the average run of animals behave. Nevertheless you cannot always predict animal conduct from the average run, any more than you can predict human conduct. There is more of the animal in humans than we used to suppose (before 1914, for instance), and there is more of the

human in animals. Anyhow, I'll take a chance, and tell *Lucy's* story in defiance of the scoffers.

But first I wish I could take you into the country where *Lucy* was born and brought up. I could, very easily, if you were here, and your wind was good, for it isn't more than a mile behind my house—or, rather, above my house. You may have been past the spot, indeed, purring along in your motor on your way to Stockbridge and Lenox. But going past it and going to it are quite different things. Leaping directly up from the State highway is the steep wall of the mountain, a long wall, or rather a series of jutting shoulders, stretching north and south for ten miles or more, with the summit a mile behind them, and beyond that more forests and scrub land, and then a precipitous wild drop into

New York State. This wall runs up for some distance, timbered heavily with birches and chestnuts and other hardwoods, and then enters a belt of fallen, fern-covered boulders with hemlocks wedged between, and finally the almost sheer precipices which lead, in a series of steps, to the top of the shoulder, where there is a forest of stunted dwarfed jack pines. In this forest herbs of deer winter, going up and down the mountain for water at the springs below, and feed when the snow is lighter. On top of the ridge the snow is always blown thin, and some food is available there in the worst weather.

Just under the ridge, at the base of the precipices and among the fallen boulders below them, are numerous little caves or dens. Into these dens the fallen leaves drift; they are more or less protected in winter, and cool in summer. You might suppose it would be a likely spot for wildcats.

It is. For the wildcat is after all a cat; and you know that the most domestic of pussies seldom care for human society as such. It hangs around you because you feed it. (Of course, if you have a cat, you won't admit this—your cat is an exception!) It prefers to mind its own business, and often resents interference. The wildcat has these traits raised to the *nth* power. Furtive, sly, alone, it wants to be let alone, to avoid contact with men, to go its own way. Though often heard yowling in the woods at night,—it has a blood-curdling yell, a sort of *meow-yang-yang-yang*,—it is seldom seen; and when it is seen, it is generally alone, sneaking along by itself, the very epitome of wild self-sufficiency.

Hence, if a mother cat wished to retire from all danger of contact with man and other disturbers

ing things, she could, in our country, hardly pick a better place than the dens amid the boulders far up on the steep mountain-shoulder.

Almost no people ever get there. There is no trail except the dim paths used by the deer, which are known only to a few hunters and trappers. The undergrowth is a dense mass of laurel through which progress is difficult and even painful; going my best, it takes me one and a half hours to make the fifteen-hundred-foot ascent to the top of the ridge.

She would have a half-mile of trackless laurel hell and dense forest below her den, and two hundred feet of precipice above, and all around, for concealment, the dense hemlocks, the ferns which drape the rocks, the dead, fallen tree-trunks, the caked masses of last year's leaves still upheld on the fallen limbs which always litter a virgin wood, making little thatched roofs under which to creep.

This is the spot that Lucy's mother chose late one winter for her home, running far from the male cat who was Lucy's father, because the male wildcat is anything but a gentleman and has a fondness for killing his offspring soon after they are born, if he can find them when their mother is out foraging. If the mother is at home, he is wise enough to leave them alone! Lucy's mother, however, had no intention of bringing her family into the world where father would be likely to find them. She ran away from him ten miles, crossed a river on the ice, a swamp on the tussocks, and went up the mountain till she came to the fallen boulders. There, in a nice, warm den lined with dead leaves, under an overhanging rock and facing to the southward, she decided to establish her home; and there Lucy and three brothers and sisters were ultimately born.

There was no great family resemblance between them. Lucy was a decided brunette, very dark, which is the accepted type of beauty among wildcats, while her two sisters were gray and dirty brown, and her brother was more or less mottled, halfway between. Had you come upon them playing in front of their "door," however, on a warm spring day, while mother lay on her side, paws lazily outstretched, purring contentedly (but with one ear up and both eyes watchful), you would have said it was a pretty picture they made, and you might have called, "Come, kitty, kitty!"—and then beat it, as mother coiled with a spitting snarl, and leaped off the rock!

But like Wordsworth's *Lucy*, few knew, and few could know, how this Lucy grew beside ways even less trodden than those beside the springs of Dove. In fact, none knew. Only twice that summer did any human being come up past the den, and on both occasions Lucy's mother heard them coming, and had the kittens far out of sight. A stray dog or two, to be sure, trailed her up the mountain after she had been down the slope and across the road into the swamp stalking pheasants. But a lone dog, without a hunter behind him, had no terrors for her. She did not court trouble, to be sure, relying on speed to escape it. But if she was forced to fight, she knew how, and if the dog got away, he was a sadder and a wiser pup. So Lucy grew unmolested with her brother and sisters, and learned the needed lessons of life in the vocational school at first conducted by her mother, and later by that still more ancient schoolmistress Dame Nature.

The children were brought up, in fact, much like domestic kittens, ex-

cept that they were taught to avoid human beings, to keep out of sight of all strange things, to hide from strange noises. But even domestic kittens are thus brought up if their mother has gone wild. These were taught to fight in play, amid the dead leaves in front of the den, and to bare their claws and strike quick and hard when the mother cat pretended to resent their attempts to play with her, and made lightning dabs at them with her powerful paw. They were taught to climb a tree, and to conceal themselves amid the branches. They were taught, by watching their mother, how to lie out on a fallen log across the deep brown pool in the brook at the foot of the slope, motionless as a statue, and make a sudden plunge with one paw, claws out and curled upward, as an unwary trout came swimming past, catching it securely under the belly with sharp, relentless claws and tossing it quickly to the bank.

They learned, too, how to creep up on partridges sitting on their nests, or sleeping; how to crouch behind a bush along the rabbit-paths and wait patiently till a cotton-tail came by, or even, in favorable spots, how to lie out along a limb over the path and drop on the rabbit from above. They learned how to run through the forest, too, as well as how to wait, always zigzagging, nose near the ground, ready to pounce on any chance deer-mouse.



He heard a sudden snarl . . . saw the green flash of eyes, and made out a form stalking toward him.



At night, as their mother went hunting through the woods, she would every now and then raise her head and emit the startling, raspy, snarling yell—*meow-yang-yang-yang-yang*—which often causes some sleepy animal or bird to start in fright and betray its hiding-place. Lucy and her brother and sisters practiced this yell, rather feebly at first, but with growing confidence and volume. All these things they learned, first from watching their mother, and then from practice, after their mother drove them with cuffs from the maternal food-supply and made them hunt for themselves.

It was considerably after the self-sustaining point had been reached that they saw their mother do a strange thing. It was early morning, not yet sunup, and in the half-light you couldn't see far through the night-mists which still enveloped the mountain at the altitude of the den. The kittens were all asleep, and so was the mother cat, having just come in weary and also hungry, after a long trip to the plain for food, a trip which was unrewarded by anything satisfying to a healthy appetite.

The previous winter had been a hard one, with deep snow and extreme cold. As a result, the partridges and pheasants were few, and the rabbits had been largely killed off by great horned owls and goshawks which descended from the north; and now the picking for wildcats was pretty poor. Indeed, the mother cat that night had been so hungry that twice she had attempted to raid a hen-yard, being driven off by dogs both times. Now she suddenly started up from her first sleep, ears pricked up, white teeth just showing, yellow-green eyes intense. Her action roused the kittens, who also started up. On soft feet the mother cat went to the entrance of the den, the kittens following.

Something was coming down the precipice above. It swished through bushes like a deer, and a second later they all caught the deer smell—though, of course, by comparison with a dog or fox, their powers of smell were slight. But it was evidently a small deer, from the sound it made. Even at that, the kittens were surprised to see their mother sneak one paw out, then another paw out, till she glided almost like a snake up over the top of the boulder above the den, and from that to another, and so to another, till she was crouched directly over the deer-trail down the mountain. She had never hunted a deer before, and the kittens knew it was because she dreaded those terribly sharp hoofs, and the sharper horns of the buck.

Scarcely had she reached her post over the trail than a fawn appeared, a bit more than half grown, trotting and leaping down the dim game-trail, evidently seeking his mother. As he drew near the old cat, his nose told him there was danger, and he suddenly reared, and then swerved toward the thicker bushes. But with a yowl the cat sprang far out from the rock, and landed squarely on his shoulder.

The deer gave a frightened bellow and began to rear and plunge as he ran, endeavoring to batter the cat off his neck by diving sideways against trees. The cat, however, with incredible speed and agility, shifted from one side of his back to the other, keeping her fore-paws around his neck, claws sunk in deep, and tearing with her powerful, razorlike teeth. The kittens saw her disappear down the mountain on her wild ride, and as fast as they could, they scampered after.

It was down in the chestnuts that they found her. The fawn had tripped and fallen, and that gave her the chance to get in a death grab at a vital artery. The little deer was breathing its last. The mother cat snarled and cuffed her hungry kittens away as they came

eagerly up to the meat, but presently she let them feed too, and all that day, their little stuffed bellies round as balloons, they slept in the sun at the mouth of their den, their mother sleeping beside them. Once or twice they woke up and purred. Life is certainly worth while when you are filled up on young, tender venison!

The kittens all grew rapidly, but Lucy fastest of all. She was destined to be a big cat, with dark fur, almost black, which thickened up as the frosty autumn nights came on, till she was worth to the hunter not only five dollars for the bounty, but another ten for her skin. Having no means of knowing this, however, Lucy was not vain. But she shared with her brother and sisters a memory of venison that made her, and them, rash with the rashness of youth. Their mother had departed now, they did not know where. They had attempted to follow, but she had turned, with a spit and a bristle of fur, and driven them back. The truth is, probably, she was weary of maternal cares for a time, and wanted to be rid of them, now they were large enough to shift for themselves. But they stayed on together in the old den, knowing no other home, and hunted the mountain, sometimes scattered, sometimes in a pack, and often going hungry for all their efforts.

Hence it was that Lucy and her brother, coming upon a fawn one day apart from its mother, sprang at it without hesitating. The brother missed it, but Lucy succeeded in landing on its back. It dived madly into the scrub, with the other cat at its heels, and almost before Lucy knew what was happening, she was knocked from its shoulder by a terrific blow. Even as she landed, she saw her brother rise in the air and go spinning into the bushes as the mother doe caught him with her hind heels. Two sore and sick cats retired to the den and nursed their wounds for several days before they were fit for hunting again. Experience is a hard teacher, but it had taught them not to tackle a small deer unless sure it was quite alone.

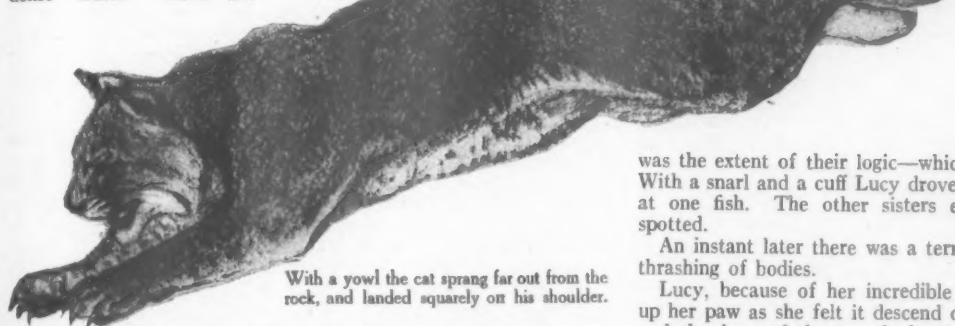
It was in December, when all four of them were hunting together, that they did come upon a young doe, hardly more than a fawn, quite alone. It was amid the jack pines on the top of the ridge above the den. All that day the cats had heard distant gunshots, both from the swamps on the plain below and even from the mountainside, and had noticed that the deer were breaking up the slope in unusual numbers. But they didn't know it was the opening day of the deer-hunting



CHARLES LIVINGSTON BULL.

season. They only knew the deer were up on the mountain in great numbers by mid-afternoon. On discovering the little doe, they tried their best to stalk it close enough to make a sure spring, but the deer was too quick for them and bolted over the ledge. The four cats bounded in full pursuit.

Down went the deer, over the precipitous rocks, twenty feet at a jump, the cats, with Lucy in the lead, only a jump or two behind. Below the ledges came the belt of tumbled, fallen boulders and rock-fragments, and here the doe had a harder time, as she had to work between the rocks, while the cats could leap from top to top. Lucy almost had her once. In fact, her claws did draw blood from the deer's hind quarters as she sprang from behind. But the deer just got through, and broke into the dense laurel. Here she



With a yowl the cat sprang far out from the rock, and landed squarely on his shoulder.

could spring over, when the cats had to work under, and she increased her lead. Once below the laurel, into the more open woods, she rapidly left the four pursuers behind.

Lucy was the last to give up the chase, but finally she turned back too, when the terrified deer broke out of the woods into an open field behind a house. Back up the mountain, Lucy made her way then, busily looking for mouse-tracks in the light snow as she went. If one couldn't have a deer, a mouse would do! Lucy was nothing if not philosophical.

But as it turned out, there was a greater tragedy lurking in this exploit than the mere loss of a venison supper. The craftiest hunter and trapper in all that section of the country had been hidden in a leaf-blind beside a deer-trail at the base of the upper ledges, thinking that the deer frightened by the hunters in the swamps below would be coming up this way. Two or three had passed him, but he was waiting for a fat buck, and didn't shoot. He had heard the racket when the little doe came plunging over the ledges, and had seen her go by, just out of gunshot, with the four cats in full pursuit. Then he had waited patiently, and he had seen the four cats come back, first one gray one, then a gray and a mottled one, then Lucy herself, so dark and fine-furred that his finger itched on the trigger. None of them, however, got near enough for a shot. They were headed, of course, for their den some distance off around a point. As sly as they, this hunter watched them disappear; nor did he attempt to follow. Instead, he went down the mountain as darkness gathered, and got down his rusty steel traps from their peg in the wood-shed.

He didn't tell anybody what he had seen, for two reasons. The first reason was that he didn't want anybody else to get those cats; the second reason was that he felt sure nobody would believe him, it being an accepted fact that wildcats hunt alone, not in packs, and never chase deer anyhow. But he had seen what he had seen, just the same.

He didn't set his traps at once. Instead he waited till deer-hunting week was over, and then he went fishing through the ice. When he had accumulated several pickerel, he journeyed up the mountain with his traps, picked up the cat-tracks in the snow, and close to their ranging trails he set his fish-baited steel jaws. Then he went down the mountain again, his pale blue eyes seeing far through the winter woods and taking in details that would quite escape your attention or mine, and reading records on the snow—the book he knew best.

Now, Lucy and her brother and sisters loved fish above all other food, just as a domestic cat does. Their noses might not be keen on a scent, as a dog's nose is, but they could certainly smell fish a long way off. Waking from her doze that afternoon, Lucy sniffed the frosty air and emitted a sharp, excited meow. The other three cats awoke too, and they also sniffed and grew excited. Out of the den all four of them went, and headed straight for the odor.

Of course, if it had been Big Reddy, the fox who lived down on the plains below, who had smelled some unexpected delicacy in the neighborhood, he wouldn't have made directly for it at all. He would have trotted in a big circle all around the smell, looking for the joker. He would have come, at some point in the circle, upon the tracks of the man who took the bait in, and that would instantly have intensified his suspicion. He would probably have followed down these tracks, and at some bush or other the trapper's carelessness would have allowed the bait to touch a twig, and the fox would have connected the bait-smell with the man track. That would have made him even more suspicious; and if, ultimately, he found the bait at the end of the man-track, no matter how hungry he might be, the chances are Big Reddy would turn away. Hence the adjective *foxy*.

But Lucy and her tribe had no such keenness of nose, nor keenness of reasoning-powers. Fish meant food; that

was the extent of their logic—which is all right so far as it goes. With a snarl and a cuff Lucy drove away her brother and pounced at one fish. The other sisters each sprang for the fish they spotted.

An instant later there was a terrific yowling and screaming and thrashing of bodies.

Lucy, because of her incredible speed of action, had twitched up her paw as she felt it descend on something cold and metallic, and the jaws of the trap had got her by one toe only. With a snarl and a lunge, she tore herself free, and diving into the thick bushes, snarling with pain and anger, began indignantly to lick the bleeding stub of her amputated toe and claw. The brother, cuffed away at first, now reaped the reward of meekness and ate the fish in safety. But the other two cats, each caught fast in a trap, were howling and plunging, trying to wrench themselves free by main strength. The moosewood saplings to which the traps were fastened swayed as in a high wind. The snow was churned up. The lonely forest resounded to their cries. But all their efforts availed them nothing. Their heartless brother sneaked around and ate their fish too.

The next morning Lucy, nursing her wounded paw in the den, heard two gunshots not far away, and pushed deeper into the shadows, snarling at her brother. There were no sounds from the trapped sisters after that. But presently there was the smell of fish again. The brother, remembering only his feast of yesterday, sallied forth. But Lucy was, like Peter's wife's mother, sick of a fever, and lay still, licking her paw. Presently she heard her brother screaming, but still she did not budge. She slept fitfully that day, his cries now and again awaking her, and at nightfall felt a little better, and very hungry, for it had been two days now since she had tasted food.

The fish smell was still in the air. Lucy went forth, her foot bleeding again as the crusty snow cut it, and ate first the fish at her brother's trap. Then she sniffed. There was more somewhere about. But Lucy was capable of learning by experience. She approached it warily. The Thing which had hurt her before had been on the ground almost under the fish. The fish was placed at the base of a rock. Lucy climbed up on the rock, lay flat on her belly, and cautiously lowered her well paw down, down, till one claw caught in the fish, and she could hook it up. Seizing it in her mouth, she went back to the den with it hastily, and ate it there at her leisure. Then she slept.

She was waked by a single shot, and of course became instantly alert. This time her senses told her, presently, that danger was approaching; she glided out of the den in the dim morning light, for the sun was not yet up, and sneaked like a ghost over the snow, and between the rocks, up the precipices above. After a time, crouched in a thicket on the topmost ledge, she peered back and saw one of the feared and hated race of men standing alert near the mouth of the den, and then coming on as if to follow up her trail. She turned once more and headed through the brush toward the summit of the mountain. She found a warm spot on the south side of a rock, and slept all day in the sun, letting her paw heal, and when night came she hunted, but in vain. The next day instinct led her back to the old den.

As she came once more to the top of the ridge, the fish-smell greeted her. This time the fish was close to the den, and at the base of a straight-faced rock too high to reach down from above

to the fish. But Lucy had other resources. She climbed a smallish hemlock, crept cautiously out on a lower branch till it sagged far down with her weight and again sneaked up the fish on her claw. She nearly fell into the trap, to be sure, but managed to land on her feet at a safe distance. Then she took her meal back up the ledge, having no desire to be awakened by a gun-barrel poked into the den.

Now, our trapper friend, having already three cats to show by way of proof, had told his story at last (and collected his bounty), and he didn't hesitate to add as new embellishment the tale of the fourth cat, Lucy, who could steal bait out of a trap, and was minus a toe off her front paw, thanks to her first lesson. Naturally, since traps seemed of no avail, somebody suggested a hunt. That was how it happened that as Lucy was returning one morning from pheasant-hunting down in the young pine thickets at the base of the mountain, taking the stone wall for a path as it was easier going, she heard suddenly the deep, purposeful baying of two hounds on her trail.

Well, if the dogs were after her, they would have considerable of a jaunt! Lucy's idea of getting away from a dog was simply to run and run till she had gone so far the dog gave up in despair. So now she headed straight up the mountain, on over the ledges, through the scrub above, over the bare, wind-swept summit cone, down the other side, across the sunny fields of the tableland which lies up there behind the dome of the big mountain, and avoiding the few scattered farms, into the dense woods on the farther side. These, however, were no ordinary dogs, she began to realize. They weren't mere stray hunters; they were trained, hard-working hounds. Ever they came baying steadily on her trail, not getting dangerously close yet, but certainly not dropping behind. Lucy rested. She was weary, and her paw hurt her, for it wasn't yet completely healed, nor the sickness all gone from her. Her rest let the dogs up too close for comfort. She plunged quickly down the cliffs ahead of her, where they drop into New York State, the dogs now in full cry behind, for one of them had caught sight of her.

Lucy was going it blind now—she was in a spot where she had never been before. Leaping along in a deep gorge beside a brook, the dogs almost at her heels, she suddenly found herself at the jumping-off place. The brook simply slid over a lip of rock and plunged straight down sixty feet! There was no turning back, for the only way back was up the gorge. Lucy didn't want to fight two dogs. She saw a tree, one of three or four pine trees down here beside the brook, growing close to the face of the cliff above her, and rising fifty feet without a limb. Just as the first dog was almost on her, she sprang for this tree, and went up the trunk just as you've seen your cat go up a tree when the neighbor's dog came into the yard.

This was exactly what the hounds expected. Having treed their quarry, they began to bark excited signals to the hunters who were coming on behind (a long way behind, by now), and to jump around the base of the trunk.

But Lucy kept on up into the branches. Once in their protection, she looked about her. Higher up, a branch leaned out and almost touched the cliff-face. Lucy went up to it, out along it, and measured the distance to the little ledge she saw on the cliff-face. Then she sprang. The dogs, seventy-five feet below, didn't see her spring or hear her soft, padded paws land on the ledge. From this ledge a slanting crevice of the rock, or small "chimney," as a mountaineer would call it, led up another thirty feet to the

top of the precipice. Lucy got into this crevice, and with the help of the frozen moss and mold lodged in it, worked her way to the top. There she crouched a moment, looking over the rim with her yellow-green eyes at the dogs below, and then slipped quietly and easily into the forest.

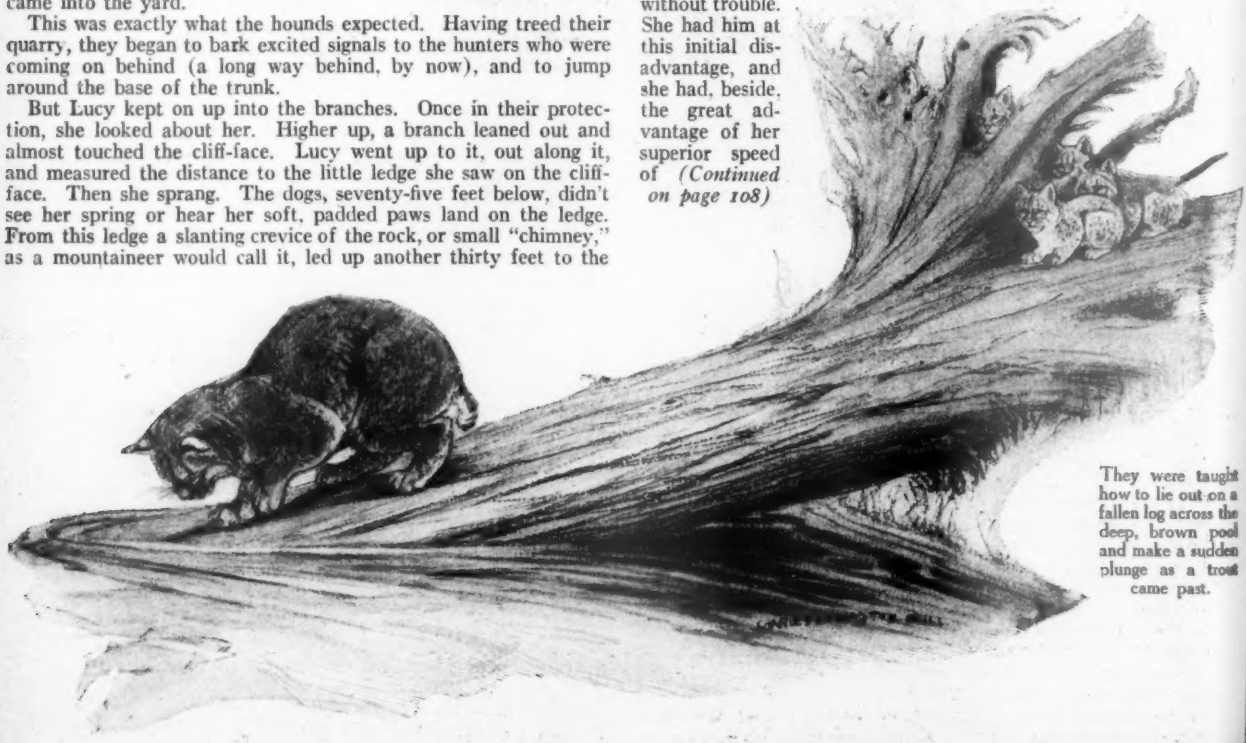
When the hunters came, they found the dogs still baying the tree. But there was no wildcat in the branches. After a while they worked around to the top of the cliff, and found out how she escaped. But it was too late to put the dogs on the trail again. They were a dozen miles from home, with a mountain between.

After that, Lucy was a famous character.

**B**EING a famous character has its penalties, especially when you've one toe missing and nobody can mistake your tracks. It was that missing toe which betrayed to Solon Littleton the fact that it was Lucy who came into his chicken-yard and killed two of his pet Rhode Island Reds. That was in February, after two weeks of tremendous cold and heavy snow. Lucy was desperately hungry. Solon had a dog, too, but the dog was sleeping inside. As soon in the morning as the theft was discovered, however, Solon put the dog on the tracks, and told him to go to it. It was a big hound dog, which had probably started out in life to be a fox-hound but had changed its mind too late for a really successful outcome, and tried to be a pointer—or a bulldog. (The matter was always in dispute between Solon and his neighbors.) The hound started off on the tracks, but Solon delayed following till his wife had given him his coffee and doughnuts (the latter broken by Solon meditatively, and the pieces dipped into the former, before eating).

Meanwhile Lucy was not a great way off—perhaps half a mile down in the swamp pines, finishing up her own breakfast and raising a mighty purr of thanksgiving therefor. The baying of one hound didn't greatly disturb her, and she let him get rather near before she started up. But she had reckoned without due consideration of the depth of the snow and the superior length of this dog's legs. She got across the road all right, on her way to the mountain cliffs (her instinctive refuge), but before she could make the woods above the high pasture, she realized that the dog would be up to her. There was no available tree—only a big cleft boulder overhung with a wild grape-vine. It was a case of having to fight, and she dived under the grape-vine, into the cleft of the rock, where she turned at bay and waited her pursuer.

The dog came crashing and baying in under the vine, and instantly Lucy was on his back. There was hardly room in that restricted cleft for him to turn around, though Lucy could double herself in it without trouble. She had him at this initial disadvantage, and she had, beside, the great advantage of her superior speed of (Continued on page 108)



They were taught how to lie out on a fallen log across the deep, brown pool and make a sudden plunge as a trout came past.

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Oswald said disapprovingly: "Haff makes me sick. Always chasing some chorus-girl. He'd better cut 'em out and get married."

## PRETTY WOMEN

By

IDA M. EVANS

Illustrated by  
CHARLES D. MITCHELL

**A**MONG American bourgeois and proletariat alike there exists a deep-rooted and widespread impression that all scions of wealth, tainted or as decently earned as a farmer's flivver, are cold-blooded philanderers, walking from silk-lined cradle to rosewood-confined grave a pathway cluttered thick with more or less unmentionable *affaires de cœur*, all their waking minutes spent in pursuing woman or being pursued—lovely woman if it so happen, unlovely woman if none lovely be around.

And where there is much smoke, there of course is to be found a portion of fire; a natural law will not be gainsaid. But in the case of one Oswald Greenman, the ordinary-featured, light-complexioned, mild-mannered though carefully and correctly garbed son of old Catharine Greenman—whose name, in spite of her immigrant introduction to America, was one mentioned respectfully by jobbers, boards of trade, income-tax collectors and her wholesale millinery competitors—in the case of Oswald, any such impression was wrong.

It may have been a certain inherent dullness in the young man, a lack of desire to grasp opportunities that floated his way. It may have been that no opportunities floated; Opportunity is an active old lady, but she can't serve everyone in this crowded world. It may have been that, having plenty of money, he found many entertaining ways of passing his young days so fast that girls and women were not quick enough to get his attention.

At any rate, his preparatory days were marked by nothing feminine more important than a small dough-faced girl, sister of a friend, who annoyed him bitterly with her requests for candy—he always had a pocketful of the highest-priced. His Harvard years had four mild flirtations, one for each year. But the first girl jilted him for a fellow more bent on matrimony; the second was an oldish college widow whom his fellow sophomores geyed him for succumbing to, and so he sheepishly quit succumbing; the third was a pale little pinched-nosed beauty who asked him too pointedly the size of his business mother's yearly income; the fourth was a chorus-girl whom he knew for just one evening.

None of the four disturbed his life more than a leaf disturbs the stream into which it falls.

After Harvard he—and his mother—had expected that he would place himself under her great business wing and learn how to take good care of the wholesale-millinery house which she had built up out of his dead father's small establishment. But along came the Great War. Young Oswald Greenman connected immediately with an Eastern training camp. While at that camp he was noted for the several thousand dollars that his lieutenant's outfit cost him, but he did not afterward confide to anyone that it had dazzled any feminine eyes; his training-camp reminiscences proved to be more testy than sentimental.

When the war abruptly ended and he came home, he hardly had time to assimilate two things—that his clever old mother's small army of employees did not seem especially impressed with his natural acumen, and that his mother's chief catalogue-artist, Annemay Doppy, had extraordinarily bright bronze-brown hair and an extraordinary pair of gray-and-violet eyes—when his mother died.

Possibly in training camp a certain sense of tactics in a crisis had been implanted in the young man. Oswald Greenman dexterously solved the problem of being an employer whose employees did not respect and so did not pull with, to the good of themselves and the business: he made most of them co-employers with himself. It was done very simply: he turned over part of his inherited stock to them, insuring their loyalty and arousing their admiration.

Then he married pretty Annemay, who had decided that he was worth a great deal of her admiration for this sudden praiseworthy action. And having married her, the young man calmly believed that life hereafter for him was to be a nicely smooth proposition, a pleasant proposition—barring, of course, disease, accident or sudden death. But being a normal young man, he did not expect any of the three to visit him or his precipitately.

SO, reading in his paper of a lively incident, consisting of a fast ride along the lake shore and a fine from an irritated judge for the same—this happening to Haff Meadows, a blond, plump young man who had been a friend of Oswald Greenman's preparatory, Harvard and training-camp days as well,—Oswald looked across the white napery, iced grapefruit and hot coffee of his pleasant mahogany-furnished breakfast-room and said disapprovingly to his pretty, bright-haired wife of four months:

"Haff makes me sick. Always chasing some chorus-girl who won't ride in any car that isn't breaking the speed-laws. He'd better cut 'em all out"—virtuously—"and get married to some nice girl and live right."

"Oh!" Annemay Greenman, *née* Doppy, laughed, thereby showing prettier teeth than she had ever sketched in a feminine face for the Greenman millinery semiannual catalogue. "Maybe your friend Haff doesn't want to marry. And why so strong in judgment? You've likely often helped him chase— After all, Oswald, now that I think of it, you've never told me much about your former love-affairs."

"Why, I never had any," quickly and truthfully he explained. "You were the first girl I ever went after, Annemay. That's straight goods."

He said it in the matter-of-fact manner which the truth called for. And thinking the assertion of little importance, he carelessly transferred his eyes from the midnight ride and morning-after fine to the column adjoining, which described some of the Czech-Slavs' latest internal cramps.

But between column and column his eyes caught the brief yet long speculative glance that his pretty-eyed wife of four months gave him. It was a glance that—

The prettiest girl with the most bronze-bright hair and the duskiest violet eyes, cannot apply herself steadily for several years to work that demands thought and concentration without showing the effect of such application and years. Annemay Doppy had once told young Oswald Greenman that getting out a wholesale-millinery catalogue, with its printers' objections, imports, prices, time-limits, glossary, artistry, facts, fancies and catch-the-gaze promises, was a devious and exacting piece of work beside which creating a league of nations was a small and trifling affair.

Somewhere in those exacting and steady years she had learned therefore to give a long yet brief speculative glance, such as she now gave her husband.

OVER the Czech-Slavs, Oswald Greenman could not forget that glance. Now, what did Annemay mean by it? It did not intimate disbelief. No, he was sure of that. But—but it somehow reminded him of some other glance of the same kind. He folded his newspaper absently and glanced oddly at

Annemay; but by that time she was engrossed with the maid, who had come into the room with more toast.

She smiled at him as usual when he rose to get into his overcoat. She kissed him as usual, twice—no mere pecks, either. Still—

Oswald frowned thoughtfully as he rode downtown. And frowning in continued thought, on the downtown way, he recalled abruptly another occasion when Annemay had given that same sort of look—not to him; and she wasn't married to him then; and he and she hadn't been talking about his past love-affairs. In fact, Annemay hadn't been talking to him at all, but to Mme. Rennie of the Greenman wholesale-house's dress-hat department. Mme. Rennie had held a hat in her long, supple white hands, a medium-sized blue hat. "And it looks like a hat that would sell fast," pettishly said Mme. Rennie. "But it don't. No one seems to—to care for it." Annemay had thoughtfully observed that every once in a while a hat was that sort, and gave it a brief yet long speculative glance, the same sort of glance that this morning—

Having parked his car, Oswald Greenman walked slowly across the way to his place of business. And passing a shop-window, he involuntarily paused and examined his clear reflection in it. It was the well-garbed reflection of a slight-built young man whose chin was too sharp to be shapely, whose eyes hesitated uncertainly between brown and hazel, and whose hair was an ordinary medium brown. He frowned; it was not a frown of wounded vanity. Still— As he, hard in thought, took very slow steps over the crossing which lay between this shop-window and the plate-glass front doors of the sixteen-story Greenman wholesale-house, a crossing policeman bawled at him: "Say, you! Move on—move on! Find some other place to dream dreams besides a crossing."

THERE was a decided lack of respect in the man's manner. Oswald Greenman reddened. And it was a sulky red, though the murmur that accompanied it and seemed to borrow sulkiness from it was not wholly concerned with the officer. "Damn it all," murmured the young man, "I never pretended to be a dazzling thing—to crossing cops or women. But that man needn't have looked at me as though I were an errand boy. And— and Annemay needn't have looked at me that way. But"—bitter and puzzled—"women are certainly queer. They pretend to prefer a man who never loved anyone but them—and then they hardly ever prefer that kind of man!"

Whereupon he so huffily dictated letters that morning to Anna Deneen, his secretary, who had been his late mother's, that that oldish, gray-pompadoured young woman was quite huffed, and considered resigning. Later he took so moody a view of the dilly-dallying post-war reconstruction of trade that Helbling, manager of the Greenman straw-department, called up the secretary of the State Commercial Association to see if anything serious in the way of strike or riot was on the way. And even late in the afternoon discomfort of mood still gripped Oswald Greenman when his friend Haff Meadows breezed in to see him.

If Oswald Greenman hadn't been so absorbed in his own discomfort of thought, he at once might have detected something peculiar in the way that plump, blond young friend of his school, college and training-camp days cast a glance over the office and its furnishings, including oldish Anna Deneen and her typewriter. It was as peculiar, that glance, as Annemay's had been.

"Say, Os," commented Haff at the same time, "you certainly look like you're doing something in this world—big littered desk, clicking typewriter and so forth." It was spoken in a way unlike Haff Meadows' usual glib style. It came slowly, earnestly.

"Indeed?" said Oswald without much interest.

"I'll say so. And—it makes me feel not worth much."

At this confession Oswald Greenman exhibited a surprise which was followed readily by some complacency. "That so?" Time had not been long back when Haff Meadows had stared long and grinningly when Oswald Greenman had announced his intention of running the business left him at the sudden death of his clever old mother, and Haff had said cuttingly: "Os, son, you're never the one to do it. Sell, bank and live on your coupons. That's the only safe course for a chap like you." Having not sold, banked or gone about living on any coupons, Oswald now not unnaturally felt some elation that the other had come round to admit his error. For the time being, some troublesome thoughts having to do with Annemay were forgotten.

"Glad to hear you say so, Haff."

Haff, who had taken a comfortable chair, leaned back in it, lighted a cigarette, stuck his two plump white thumbs in his vest pockets and went on:



Miss Grinchley laid her cards on the table. "Mr. Greenman, would you like your wife—I hear you're very fond of her—to know that you have lunched with me three times?"



"And it's just occurred to me, Os, that if you could step in and keep this establishment running all right, maybe I've underestimated my own ability too. Guess I ought to be able to do something toward steering myself toward a prosperous middle age!"

His friend assented to this praiseworthy assertion with a civil nod, though beginning to feel a trifle bored. At preparatory schools, at Harvard and at training camp, various elderly observers had taken pains to predict that plump, blond Haff Meadows was one of the things that made thinking men doubt the intelligence of a Creator—though Haff, until his poor old father went bankrupt recently, had made away with many dollars, he had never, so far, added any to the earned increment of a perspiring world.

"You've set me to thinking, Os," he now surprisingly went on.

"Well—I'm glad to hear that, Haff!"

"Yes. And—I don't know if I've told you that I'm thinking of getting married?"

"No, you haven't. Glad to hear that, Haff! Only life there is!"—with the loyalty of a satisfied benedict.

"I think so too. And if I don't marry Luella, she's liable to marry some one else any old day."

"Luella?"

"Girl I once told you about—in the Lou-Lou revue chorus. Beauty, Luella is. Taking all in all,"—young Mr. Meadows' tone was calm but judicial,—"I don't know as the Lord, if he made a special job of it, could produce a more perfect specimen than Luella Goldwell."

For plump, blond Haff, who had gone through college with what one professor described as less vocabulary and more slang than belonged to any other man who unworthily ever stepped under the classic portals, this was a long and astonishing speech. Oswald Greenman's eyes widened—and turned a little toward the frame on his desk which contained the pretty picture of his own Annemay. However, he did not start any argument with his friend, who continued:

"Of course, I know I can never support Luella as she ought to be supported. She deserves"—musingly—"all the luxury that ever woman had."

"Guess you'll have to go to work, then, Haff," grinned Oswald. "Silk stockings cost, these days."

"You said it, Os," to his surprise his friend returned with feeling. "I've got to go to work. And I want to work—for my Luella. I'm right out now to trail a job, stalk a job, accumulate a job!" He beamed.

"Well, I wish you all luck," said Oswald Greenman innocently.

"Thank you, Os!" Into Haff Meadows' beaming smile there instantly flashed a great gratitude. And even in the inception of that flash there came a premonition to his hearer.

"Oh, thank you, old man," declared Haff. "I knew—I knew you'd never go back on a friend. I knew you were the only person I needed to call on. Just last night, Os, old man, I was recalling all our old days together, boyhood days, college days—"

"Oh, you—you were?" Oswald Greenman moved his chair a cold inch away from his friend's. Surely Haff Meadows wasn't going to ask him—

But Haff was. Beamingly, assuredly, he put, not the question, but the statement:

"Just you give me a job, Os. I said to myself, and I said to Luella, no need to worry. Os will wedge me in among his high-salaried managers or salesmen. Ten thousand a year at least. That's all. Of course, if your mother was alive, Os, I don't know as I'd care to connect up with this house, meaning no offense to you or disrespect to her. But she had a reputation for certainly making folks work."

OSWALD GREENMAN passed over this stricture on his clever old parent then lying under a marble shaft in Rosehill. He hardly heard it; he was aghast at his friend's request—no, hardly request; *assurance* was the better word.

He blurted: "But Haff, you know that this concern no longer belongs solely to me. When I learned, and darned quick, that I didn't have the experience or brains to run it, I put it on a cooperative basis. I couldn't give you the job without consulting many men."

Haff was taken back. "But you own half the stock yet?"

"Yes—fifty-one per cent, in fact, including Annemay's. She was an employee at the time, and so—"

"Well, I guess a fifty-one-per-cent can give an old friend a pay-roll place in spite of any double-barreled cooperation! Which, by the way, if you'll pardon me, Os, for speaking plainly, was a very foolish move on your part. Quixotic—imbecile, rather!

I'll bet you and I together could have run it fine and held the whole works."

"Maybe," said Os shortly. "But I did what I thought was best, and I still think it best, as the business is running smoothly, man, woman and girl interested and pulling hard."

"Glad of that," put in the other comfortably. "I'd rather connected with a business that's running smoothly than one grunting uphill. I want to know a salary will be steady, not sional."

"But Haff—"

"There's this point," went on Haff: "though I said I altogether approve of this cooperative thingamajig, still, it me too. For I won't have to consider that my salary is altogether out of your pockets, my boy, and so there needs any question of master and man to mar our old boyhood ship, Os."

Oswald seized upon this speech for the opening it gave.

"But you see, Haff, that's the point. It won't be out of pocket solely, or I'd give you a job in a minute. It's out of other men's too. And I have to consult them."

"Consult 'em. I don't mind that little red tape."

"But—but—"

"You've certainly got the power to hire one man in your place of business?" demanded Haff, showing the birth of offense.

"In a way, yes. But we held a mass-meeting, and every one of us agreed faithfully to do nothing against the others' intent to submit everything to discussion and common agreement."

"You're sort of insinuating," said Haff in surprise and in anger, "that hiring me will be against the best interests of—"

FOR a moment Oswald Greenman hesitated. But at that moment Helbling, of the straw department, passed the open door. He was a fat, stooped man, shirt-sleeved. Haff Meadows could not know that once that stooped, person had said to young, dapper Oswald Greenman: "You're a man, not many would have done what you've done. Believe there's some of us older men aint going to give anyone a job to say you blundered. We'll act for your interests—as we acted for ours this day."

Now, as Helbling passed by, Oswald Greenman's hesitation passed. He eyed Haff stubbornly and said flatly: "Well, wouldn't be for a house's best interests. Think it over. You're no salesman. And you don't know enough about the livery business to manage a department."

"I'm not a baby," snapped Haff, whose face was turning red. "I could pick up the details. And if you're really ready, your old boyhood—"

"I can't help it, Haff."

"Can't you? Well, I must say, Os, I'm surprised. If I'd a hog and tried to stick you for a fancy salary— But you for yourself ten thousand dollars isn't a lot! Any man's worth that much, whether he works or not. But Luella figured out we could live on it—"

"You ought to," muttered Oswald. "Annemay and I are on eight. Annemay says she isn't going to spend more while Side babies—"

"Mrs. Greenman and Luella may not have the same taste," coldly retorted Haff, rising. "Well, one lives and learns. I learned that friendship isn't—"

"Haff,"—pleadingly,—"honest, if I alone was concerned, I'd slap your name onto my pay-roll so quick—"

"Never mind."

"But Haff—"

"Never mind!"—haughtily walking out.

"Want a loan?" begged the other. "Say, Haff, let me let enough to start you in some business of your own; I'll be to—"

"Never mind," snapped the plump, blond Haff, stalking stily down the corridor. "Luella distinctly told me to get not a loan."

Oswald Greenman might have thought over this last and obtained a light on the nature of the home life soon enjoyed by his old friend. But he was so irritated by the and the stern necessity he felt for refusing Haff, who had dispensed with by the Harvard faculty for refusing to study by a training camp for refusing to drill, that he at once made effort to put the entire incident out of his mind.

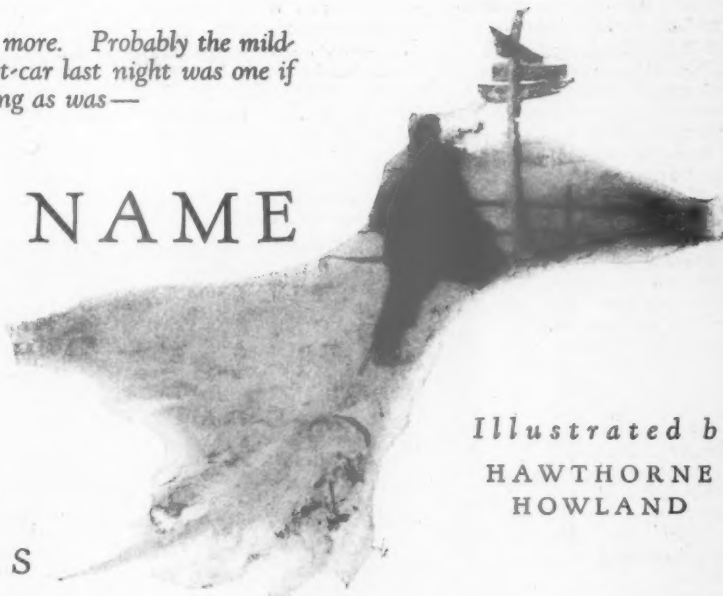
The afternoon was over, anyway, and dinner and Annemay were next on the program.

And it may be that the word *friendship* did not mean Oswald Greenman that it means to some (Continued on page

YOU don't have to search for heroes any more. Probably the mild-appearing man across from you in the street-car last night was one if you only knew. The best of them are unsung as was—

# A MAN BY NAME O' CHAMPLIN

By CHARLES  
WESLEY SANDERS



Illustrated by  
HAWTHORNE  
HOWLAND

NO one but the waitress was in Mrs. Maloney's restaurant beside the railroad tracks. She had gathered up the dishes from which the last train-crew had eaten and had borne them to the kitchen in the rear, where Mrs. Maloney herself was now washing them.

The girl was red-haired, with an intensely white face, save for a kind of breathing color in her cheeks. It was a temperamental color. Sometimes it stood in her cheeks steadily for many minutes. Again it receded with sudden violence. Sometimes it rushed back. Again it crept back with fluttering timidity.

The girl's eyes had that changeable quality, too. Sometimes they seemed to drowse. Again they were wide-open, eager. Sometimes they flashed fire. Again they burned steadily with a flame that could sear if a man grew bold.

Her name was Estelle—Estelle Kemp. Trainmen called her Miss Kemp. When she had first come to the restaurant, one or two had essayed "Estelle." Only one had attempted the closer familiarity of "Stella." On the first occasions Estelle's eyes had flashed; on the last they had burned with that searing flame.

At that time—in the late eighties—it was more difficult for a girl to command respectful address from the rank and file of railroad men than it is now. They were a rougher lot. The flowing bow was denied them by rule, but the rule was honored more in the breach than the observance. Also, there was a class which was now almost disappeared; that was the "boomer," the man who worked only long enough to get a sense of direction, the restless wanderer, homeless by choice, always on the move.

Boomers were a menace to a girl like Estelle. She had learned that quickly. She hated them as a class and as individuals, with a hate as vivid as the color in her cheeks or her flaming hair. She thought that some fine day she might kill one of them; for without knowing it, Estelle was an extremist; she had never stood on neutral ground.

It was raining outside to-night, a violent, dashing autumnal rain. The wind rattled the triangular metal sign in front of the restaurant; the rain flooded against the windows; and there the wind whined and sobbed as if it sought escape from the elements of which it was a part. As Estelle walked toward the front of the restaurant, she observed that there was a trickle of water beneath the door. She had a housewifely instinct, undeveloped as yet, and she picked up a broom which stood behind the door. She swept the trickle back, and with a flirt of the broom sprayed the water beneath the crack out on the step.

She was about to replace the broom when she stopped, her attention arrested by the sight of a man's face pressed against the pane at her right. It was a reddened, hardened face, guiltless of beard, though chin and upper lip were black where a beard was ready to start after a very recent shaving. It was a big face, with broad flat cheeks spreading away from a wide-nosed, prominent nose. The mouth was wide, but it was only a straight line, upper and lower lips being clamped together, as if, as Estelle

guessed, the man's teeth were locked. She guessed that the more because of the look in the man's eyes. Those eyes were wide open, blue like very clean ice, and as cold as ice. That figure of speech was Estelle's, and it made her shiver unaccountably. No other man, so far as she could recall, had ever made her shiver.

She was glad when the face disappeared from the window, but she was more interested than frightened when it appeared beyond the glass in the door. With more gentleness than Estelle had expected, the door was opened. She stepped back in amazement at the size of the man who appeared in the doorway. She had thought the face at the window a big face, but she saw now that it was only in keeping with the man's body. He was not molded on graceful lines. All of him was huge; his shoulders were broad, and his chest was deep; but these did not narrow down to slender flanks and legs—he dropped straight from shoulder to hip, and his legs were like telegraph-poles. Strength, Estelle saw, was what he had in astounding abundance. Of beauty he had none, except strength's own sheer rough beauty.

Estelle's eyes flitted from her brief scrutiny of him to a closer scrutiny of his clothing. Usually she could place a man by his clothing, but she could not place this man. He wore leather boots into which trousers of heavy brown corduroy were tucked. A mackinaw which had blues and browns and reds in it was drawn up about his throat. The peak of a heavy fur cap was thrust back from his eyes. Estelle, who was imaginative, had a notion that those eyes scorned protection. They seemed to say for themselves that they wished to see what was going on.

Now they swept the restaurant in one comprehensive glance before they came to rest on Estelle's face. When they did so come to rest, they remained there with a steadiness, a searching inquiry, which in spite of herself brought the blood flooding into Estelle's cheeks. She was quite pretty then, alive like some flaming flower, a sight that had set many a man's pulses to hammering or to fluttering, according to the kind of man he was.

But the icy look remained in the stranger's eyes. It baffled and nettled Estelle. She would have been quick to resent any dawning appreciation in the man's regard of her, and yet his cold unconsciousness of her provoked her queerly.

"There's nobody here, eh?" the man said at last.

Estelle had an impulse to be flippant, though she had always told herself that she must never be flippant with men. That would be laying aside her armor. She had never yet laid aside her armor—but this man was different. He was so aloof, so remote, so absorbed in himself, in what was occupying his mind.

"Why, I'm here, and you're here."

That was what Estelle had an impulse to say. What she did say was:

"There's nobody here."

The stranger took off his cap and shook the water from it. Estelle was astonished to see that his close-cut hair was black as jet. That color served to emphasize the blueness of his eyes.

For a moment the man stood with his cap in his hand, his eyes bent on the floor. Then he suddenly raised his eyes. Estelle had much the same feeling that she would have had if he had swiftly stepped close to her. He was no longer aloof. Eagerness had replaced that cold look in his eyes. Estelle felt as a bug placed under a microscope must feel, except that the stranger seemed to be reading her soul instead of her physical aspects.

At last he sighed. "I want to ask you somethin'," he said in a low voice. "I hope you'll tell me the truth."

The intense earnestness of his manner communicated itself to Estelle. She wanted to hear his questions, because he could not question her without revealing something about himself. Her curiosity was so great that she did not wonder that she was curious.

"What do you want to know?" she asked.

He did not ask her anything. He made a statement, the import of which Estelle had to be quick-witted to catch. He seemed to have made that statement so often that he believed a fragment of it would enable anyone to piece out the whole.

"He's a man that'd stand up above my shoulder, near as big as me other ways, a hammer-head, got a scar on his right cheek where a knife sometime ripped him, sticks his head out a-front of him when he walks, bow-legged some, dressed like me, mebber, dirty mostly. . . . You'd remember him, miss, if he come in here and you alone."

It seemed to Estelle as if there was a-burst of song in her heart. She remembered the man—bitterly. She was now standing almost on the very spot on which she had stood when he had reached out an unwashed hand and laid it on her arm. The searing look in her eyes had been accompanied by violent words on that occasion. The man had slunk away before the torrent of her righteous young wrath.

Something of this, or all of it perhaps, must have been written in her expressive face, for the big man before her took a deep breath and then exhaled slowly, quite as if he had suddenly been relieved of a physical strain. Estelle saw his big body relax.

"He goes by the name of Jack Smith," she said. "He—"

The big man waved her words aside with a great hand.

"No need to tell me what he done," he said. "Just tell me where he is."

"He was here an hour ago," said Estelle.

"Workin' on the railroad?"

"Flagman."

"When will he be back?"

"To-morrow night, probably."

The man took off his mackinaw, and stepping across the room, hung it and his cap on a peg.

"I'm hungry," he said. "I aint paid as much attention to my eating as I should. Please bring me plenty of meat, potatoes and bread. While it's cookin', you set here beyond me."

Estelle had never yet "set beyond" a patron of the restaurant, but when she had transmitted the man's orders to the kitchen, she sank down across from him. It may have been the prospect of abundant food, or a subtler feeling which brought a gentler look into the man's eyes; at any event the ice in them had melted.

Estelle felt her bosom grow warm as she looked at him. Estelle cast about for a reason for that, and found it in two words: "He's clean!"

It was delightful to Estelle to be in the presence of a man like that. She relaxed, sank back in her chair, watched him from lidded eyes. She was not yet fascinated by him, but she was ready to yield to fascination if it came.

"What's your name, please?" the man asked.

"Estelle," she answered, and did not seem to realize that she thus proffered to him the right to address her with a familiarity which she had denied to others.

"Mine is Champlin," he said. "I had decided to see I can trust you, Estelle. I always got to make sure whether I can trust folks or not. . . . Daggett. This man's name is Lanson. He aint got no more brains than my arm. I'll see Smith. Pah! Well, him and me and Joe Daggett worked in the Michigan mines."

"Coal mines," asked Estelle, in both hands.

"Ore-mines. Worked there all our lives with the Cousin Jack. Decent folks, them. Lanson and Daggett, them two had a quarrel. Gosh, Daggett wa'n't no bigger a man than you are a woman, but he licked Lanson somethin' terrible. Bloodied him and bruised him till he couldn't see nor stand up."

"Up there when a fight's done, it's generally done. Men shake hands and forget it. If they should come together again, out in the open, when the licked man has got his second wind. Lots of them don't know when they're licked. Well, not Lanson. He killed my friend Joe Daggett."

Upon that statement Champlin immediately withdrew into himself. Estelle saw that he was picturing anew the death of his friend at Lanson's hands. She supposed he had framed mental pictures for himself a great many times. She did not speak, and he came out of his contemplation suddenly.

"They went down into the mine together in the morning," went on. "Only Lanson come out. We went looking for him without no questions being asked. We found him. He was down with his head bashed in. There was ore scattered about, but careful. Nobody said nothing. They all left the matter to me. I went huntin' for Lanson, but he had flew the coop. I been huntin' for him for nigh onto a year now."



"No need to tell me what he done," said Champlin. "Just tell me where he is."



He paused, and a question leaped to Estelle's lips. Before she could put it to him, Mrs. Maloney announced that his food was ready. Estelle served it. Champlin abandoned himself to its consumption as if he had not eaten to his satisfaction for many days. At last he pushed back the dishes and put his elbows on the table. He interlaced his big fingers and rested his heavy chin on the backs of them.

"What'll you do when you find Lanson?" Estelle asked. Champlin's red blood came up into his neck, flowed to his cheeks, mounted clear to his black hair. The glacial look in his eyes was replaced by one as hot as flame itself. It was no dancing flame of madness, but the steady heat of an unquenchable hate.

"I'll kill him," he said in a voice which had a strangely still quality. "Kill him slow and sure. Choke him to death, most likely. Make him know and feel he's dyin' by inches."

His statement struck no horror to Estelle's heart. The night Lanson had laid his hand upon her, she would have killed him herself if she had had the strength.

But she caught a meaning of her own from what Champlin said.

"You stick to your friends, don't you?" she asked. "I guess you'd keep on going for the rest of your life, if it was necessary, to get Lanson in the end."

And from her praise of him, Champlin plucked an emotion which was doubtless new to him. He unlaced his fingers, reached over and laid a hand on her arm. She did not withdraw as she had withdrawn from Lanson and from other men.

"You're a good girl, too," he said. "You'd back a man up in a thing like this."

"Lanson got familiar with me one night," Estelle said to him.

Champlin sat staring at her, his hand still on her arm. A new interest was being born in him, the first genuinely new interest that had come to him since he had set out in pursuit of the man who had killed his friend. He felt that somehow this girl and himself were of a kind. She was stronger than her slender body suggested. She had not quailed before his dire threat. Indeed she had abetted him, urged him on. There was a woman for you!

But as his interest in her reached its peak, it suddenly toppled down. He had sworn he would be avenged for the death of Joe Daggett. Nothing, he had declared to himself, should turn him aside. So far he had traveled a straight path. He must not permit himself to be diverted here at the end of the trail. He must not let her wrongs become confused with the deadly wrong Lanson had done to Daggett.

And yet she was so very magnetic. He stirred restlessly in his chair and removed his hand from her arm.

"I'll see you to-morrow," he said, rising abruptly. "Can you find out just when Lanson's train will be along?"

"Easy," she answered. "All I've got to do is to phone over to the telegraph-office. The operator will find out for me."

"Who's this operator?" Champlin demanded.

"Why," said Estelle, confused by the swift luminosity which had come to his eyes, "he's—he's just the operator over at the rail-dock."

"Oh!" said Champlin; and he paid his bill and left.

For the first five minutes after his departure, neither of them was capable of straight thinking. Champlin was worried lest he had done the dead Daggett an injustice by letting his feeling for the girl shake his single intention for even a moment.

Estelle forgot all about Daggett. She thought only of Champlin—a confused, sweet recollection of him.

She was still thinking of him in that way when he came into the restaurant the next night. She gave him a rosy, level-eyed look. Though a bitterly cold rain was still falling, she noticed at his mackinaw was open. As she looked at him, he ran his finger around inside the collar of his rough blue shirt. She expected his first question would be as to the whereabouts of Lanson's train, but it was not.

"Well, say," he said in a low voice whose tensely surprised her, "I thought I'd be down here for my supper, but you don't know what a nice place I got into. I went up the street looking for a place to sleep, and I couldn't find no place, and I come along to a house where the lights was shinin' through the windows. I could see the folks inside, a man and a woman and a little girl.

"I guess I didn't tell you about Joe Daggett's home, did I? I think, as I look back, that one reason why I cottoned to him so strong was that he had a home. Me, I've never had a home since I can remember. I used to go up to Joe's every Saturday night for supper. His mother was the nicest old lady you ever met. One of these here kind women. She didn't distinguish none between Joe and me. She used to treat me just like I was her own son on these Saturday nights, always having somethin' extra for supper, and in winter a big fire goin'. We'd sit and talk. . . . She'd tell stories about the old days in Michigan when there was deer and bears up there. . . . I always thought that it was her influence that made Joe the quiet, gentle kind of man he was. . . . He wouldn't of got into this fuss with Lanson, only Lanson called him a name no man could stand for. . . . When Joe got roused, he went after his man fast and sudden. But he always felt sorry about it afterward."

He paused and tried to smile.

"Aint I ramblin' in my mind, though?" he said.

"Go on," said Estelle rather breathlessly.

"I knocked on the door of this here house up the street and told them how I was fixed, and could I sleep there all night?" he pursued. "Well, they said to come right in, and they sure made me to home. This lad runs a meat-market downtown, and I went down there with him this morning and hung around all day. Tonight I went home with him again, and we had supper, and me and the kid played together. . . . Seemed just like them Saturday nights at Joe's. . . . Say, how soon's Lanson's train going to pull in?"

Estelle had sat relaxed, fascinated. Her home was a dull, bare room above the restaurant. Now she took up the telephone and put the receiver to her ear.

"It'll be here in fifteen minutes," she said as she put the telephone down. "It will go in on the siding for a passenger-train. Be here for twenty minutes anyhow."

"Lanson will be goin' back with his flag while they get into clear," he said.

"And he'll come along the track toward the train in the rain and the dark," she said.

"Alone," the man added.

"Alone," Estelle agreed.

Champlin threw up his head and shook his big shoulders. She saw him attempt to force that icy look back into his eyes. But he could not do it. Something in his soul, some rekindled white flame, had melted that ice.

"It'll be going," he said.

He turned to the door.

"Button up your coat against the rain," Estelle ordered.

He obeyed without a word and passed out of the room. As he went along the sidewalk in front of the window, he glanced inside. Estelle saw that there was a perplexed look in his eyes.

She sat down at one of the tables. From her place she could see the clock. When Champlin had left, it had been fifteen minutes past nine. Nine-thirty came, very slowly, it seemed to Estelle.



Estelle had thrown the front door wide and was leaning out, peering.

She rose and walked to the door. She opened it a little and stood listening, her vivid head bent. An eternity seemed to pass while she waited for the whistle of the engine on Lanson's train. When the whistle at last sounded, she started, and the color fled from her cheeks.

Mrs. Maloney came to the kitchen door. Estelle had thrown the front door wide and was leaning out, peering. She saw the engine creep past the road, saw the dark bulk of the train follow it for a dozen car-lengths and then come to a full stop.

"Shut the door," Mrs. Maloney cried. "You're freezin' the place."

Estelle turned about on her with a violent look in her dark eyes. Mrs. Maloney started back in astonishment. She seemed to think that Estelle was due for one of the outbreaks of temper which were not infrequent with her. But Estelle only darted past her, leaving the door open. Mrs. Maloney gazed after her without closing the door, while Estelle put on her hat and slipped into her rain-coat.

"Where are you goin'?" Mrs. Maloney demanded as Estelle ran back to the door.

"Out — away — down to the tracks."

She was gone before Mrs. Maloney could think of another question. Mrs. Maloney closed the door, muttering.

Estelle sped along the dark road as if she had borrowed the wings of the wet wind that was blowing. She came at length to the tracks. The train had been cut, and the engine had dragged the head-end forward, so that the crossing would not be blocked.

Estelle looked back toward the caboose. The green lights showed plainly through the rain. Beyond those she could see a red light. This was swinging in time to a man's step. She knew that Lanson was coming in with his flag. Champlin was not in sight.

Estelle ran along the rough right-of-way beside the train. It was very dark, and the rain whipped into her face. Her skirts beneath the rain-coat became wet and impeded her progress. Lanson reached the caboose just before she did.

She stopped within three car-lengths of him. She saw him slip his lantern over his arm and put up a hand to reach the caboose hand-holds. Then a figure detached itself from the heavy shadows beside the caboose.

"Just a minute, Lanson," Estelle heard Champlin say. Champlin's voice, as Estelle knew it would be, was very steady. She imagined that that icy look had come back into his eyes.

Lanson stopped, that one hand still upraised. He seemed incapable of changing his attitude. Estelle supposed that he had recognized Champlin, and that the recognition had sent a paralyzing fear through him.

"Come here," Champlin said.

He let fall a heavy hand upon Lanson's shoulder. Estelle saw Lanson dragged back. Then a horrid scream broke from Lanson's lips, such a scream as a man rarely utters.

Estelle ran forward. The door of the caboose was thrown open and a man whom Estelle recognized as the conductor stepped out on the platform.

"What's going on down there?" he demanded.

The light of his white lantern shone down on the faces of the

two men. Champlin's face was like stone. Lanson's eyes protruded from their sockets.

Champlin lifted his graven face to the conductor.

"I'll have no interference here," he said. "This man insulted a girl I know, and I'm going to beat him up a few for doin' it."

The conductor seemed to have no intention of interfering. He seemed only curious. He hooked his lantern over his arm, grasped the hand-holds, and leaned down.

"Now, then, Lanson," Champlin said, "will you fight?"

But there was no fight in Lanson. He only stood shivering, with Champlin's heavy hand on his shoulder. Champlin stood staring down at him.

"I swore I'd kill you for murderin' my friend Joe Daggett, but—" Champlin began.

"Wait just a minute, Champlin," Lanson said in a voice so low that he reached Estelle as a whisper. "Don't go chokin' me."

death. . . . I'll tell you about Daggett. . . . You know we had that scrap? Well, next day in the mine I took it up with him again, when we was alone for a minute. He told me to drop it to forget it. He said there wasn't no use in carrying it on, thought he was afraid because we was there alone. I know afterwards that he wasn't. So I called him that name again, and smashed him one when he wasn't lookin' for it. You know wasn't a man quick to anger. But when he did get mad, he was mad all through. Gen'ally he stuck by the law. That was the thing about him—he stuck by the law.

"Well, he heaved himself on top of me and got his hands on my throat. You know how it is with these here law-abidin' people. They're hell-benders if they get started. I was sure was goin' to kill me. My hands went gropin' and I found a piece of ore with a sharp edge. I brought it up against his head, and his hold on my throat loosened. I let him have it again. I free of him then and got to my feet. . . . He moved. I was scared stiff of him. . . . I found another piece of ore right by my feet, and I let him have that with all my strength. And didn't move no more. . . . It was an honest-to-Gawd fight, Champlin. . . . You let me go."

The conductor leaned down still further. "Neighbor," he said



"Now, then, Lanson," Champlin said, "will you fight?"

"With Campbell's fare so rich and rare  
Just give me a husky spoon  
Then every day will bloom like May  
And smile like sunny June."



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"you've got his confession. You don't want to go stickin' your head into a noose for the likes of him. He's no good. Anybody with half an eye can see that. I knew it the minute I laid eyes on him. Don't soil your hands with him."

**C**HAMPLIN did not answer in words. His free hand suddenly went up and came down on Lanson's mouth. It was a terrible blow. Lanson strangled, and Estelle knew that his lips had been split and that his blood was flowing into his mouth as he gasped for breath.

Estelle wanted to scream to Champlin to let him go. She did not care about Lanson, one way or the other. She did not care that he would be hurt—that he had already been hurt. But also she no longer desired revenge on him.

But she did not want Champlin, as the conductor had said, to put his neck in a noose on Lanson's account. She understood how much greater his danger was than Lanson's. But she could not scream. Champlin would do what he willed to do, in spite of her or anybody else.

Champlin struck Lanson on the mouth again. Lanson went to his knees, his face upturned. Champlin slapped his face with a hard, open palm. In the light from the conductor's lantern Estelle saw that Lanson's face was torn and bleeding. Suddenly his eyes went shut.

Champlin picked him up and tossed him onto the caboose platform, the conductor dodging to let the inert body pass him.

"Can I ride down some place with you where I can turn this lad over to the police?" Champlin said.

"He looks to me like he needed a doctor more'n a policeman," the conductor said. "But you can ride, mister, if you promise to keep the peace."

Champlin put up his hands to mount to the caboose platform. Estelle saw that he was not smiling at the conductor's jest.

Estelle, her warm blood a-flood in her face, sprang forward and called Champlin's name.

He turned slowly, as if he were incredulous of what his ears recorded. He dimly discerned Estelle, and strode up to her.

"You didn't kill him, did you?" she whispered.

"No," he said, his eyes on her flaming cheeks and her brilliant eyes. "I didn't kill him. Let me tell you: last night when I was in that meat-man's house, it come to me that Daggett wouldn't want him killed. Why, even he, dull as he is, and brutal, remembered Joe only as a law-abidin' man. And so Joe was. . . . And there was Joe's mother. She's all alone, and I was a kind of another son to her. She's been needin' me while she tended Joe's grave up there in the hard

Michigan country. I got to go back to her. I couldn't throw my freedom away, mebbe my life, while she was needin' me. It would've been too cruel to her, and Joe wouldn't never have forgave me. . . . So I'm going back."

Estelle was breathing fast. She put out an uncertain hand, and it fell on Champlin's corded arm. He took the hand in a sudden, hard grasp.

"You and me somehow struck fire last night," he said. "I want you. We'll have a home where we'll both be safe. . . . You know how you are, kind of willful. You get mad quick, like me. I'm goin' back to look after Mother Daggett while she lives. Lemme look after you too, Estelle."

"You need a little looking after yourself," Estelle said. . . . "Oh, I'm so glad, though, that you punished him for Joe Daggett's sake."

She could feel the swift expansion of the big chest she lay against.

"Sho!" said Champlin. "I didn't beat him for Joe's sake. I beat him for yours. I'd have beaten him for your sake if nine nooses had been danglein' over my head ready to drop on my neck. That's a different proposition, Estelle."

Estelle shivered, but warmly.

"Always keep me safe," she murmured. "Leave that to me," Champlin returned with lifted head.

## JOLANDA—V. V. V.

(Continued from page 38)

wholly reckless mood. For I've followed the rainbow to the end—and there was no pot of gold! Perhaps the loss of a tooth would sober me far more than graver disaster." She began humming in gay-sad fashion, smiling at Jolanda in a way that made the vampire novice yearn to get down and unbutton the little boots to prove her devotion.

"I really hate nothing more deadly than parsnips and shirtwaists," Mrs. Dedloff continued. "So your notions about me are oversubscribed. . . . You have a brother and sister and a home and parents—and a vampire over the way! So remember, when the home grows so stolid and respectable that you must find a vent, come slipping through the French windows; and if I'm driving—wait for me and read all the novels you like, try on my damn-gorgeous gowns and putter with my make-up box—I'll tell Marie to give you the keys of the city. And when I come in, we'll have tea and talk of everything that you want to talk about, and while you pretend we are sister vamps, I'm going to pretend you are mine! Funny? We'll drink to secrecy—so secrecy, no matter what. And I don't think, when you're nearly half a century, —a lovely gray-haired thing in lavender tea-gowns,—that you'll be the worse for lending a breath of spring to just a tired old child." She kissed Jolanda, breathless little kisses on her cheeks, and Jolanda laid her sunny brown head on the blue velvet shoulder and halfway sobbed.

"Oh, darling—I'll die when you wont have me for tea. Nothing else could ever matter as much—nothing."

Mrs. Dedloff's gay, queer voice was say-

ing: "When the discussion as to the new parlor curtains or the reason Peter's shoes need half-soling so often becomes too vigorous—come and tell me all about it, and I'll repay you by describing Italian sunsets and Russian court receptions."

"I won't waste time telling grubby old things—"

"You must; that's your price of admission," Mrs. Dedloff retorted. "I'm keen to hear things too—your sort of things. When one marries from desperation and finds one has married a madman with millions to employ in making everyone as miserable as possible, and when you're a *chez-fence* person and no one helps you down from the fence onto green pastures—well, you end like I do, Jolanda—quite out of it all, and with cobwebby memories for your pains. But all this happened when you were not and I was only quite; so we wont discuss it further. Remember, you are mine—for at least two afternoons a week; and when I think it's harming you the least mite, I'll pull up stakes and go away."

"When you go away, I'll die," Jolanda said solemnly.

"And you must call me Violet."

**T**HREE weeks gave Hamilton time to view Mrs. Dedloff in the more startling of her costumes and her three automobiles, her electric cab, her touring-car and the French limousine. Yet only tradesmen had welcomed her to her old home; as yet no old schoolmate had sat in the Dedloff drawing-room to recall bygone times.

"A few have halfway batted an eye," Mrs. Dedloff told Jolanda during one of

their vampire teas, "but the majority have given me to understand that their ostracism reeks of the continuous. But what care I as long as I've Jolanda?"

The Triangle Club had disbanded by common consent. Daphne McGrath had a redoubled interest in filling the cedar chest, and Gladys Patterson was bent on a course in classical dancing. Jolanda scarcely heeded the club disorganization; even the bromidic surroundings of her home were of minor importance, for by day she waited until tea-time came and after clever reconnoitering in the woods slipped through the hedge and found her way in the always open French windows of the Dedloff mansion. By night she dreamed her dreams of Mrs. Violet Dedloff and planned on the morrow's meeting.

Meanwhile the town Hamilton wondered how long this solitary, "awful" little person was to remain in its midst. As Jolanda's father had said, it was not convenient for Hamilton to have a home-grown vampire on its hands. Nor did said vampire try to bribe her way by charitable donations. She held herself aloof from Hamilton as Hamilton had threatened to hold itself aloof from Mrs. Dedloff. The municipal curiosity was beginning to break under the strain; Hamilton was almost ready to ask Mrs. Dedloff questions. Added to the old rumors of Mrs. Dedloff's escapades and her husband's escapes from the sanitarium, his threats of murder and so on, was the present knowledge that her terrier Kumbac had three sets of harness and blankets as well as white rubbers, and Mrs. Dedloff had just purchased a miniature Chinese garden made of real jewels—the

pointing to Freckles. "This is the boy that owns the dog that played the *Bloodhound* last night; and he is Mr. H. Watson!"

And when she took off her glasses like that, we all saw she was the *Little Eva* of that show!

"Mr. H. Watson," says Jim to Freckles, "did you intend matrimony, or were you trying to flirt?"

"Quit your kidding him, Jim," says *Little Eva*, still laughing. "Can't you see he's backed nearly to death?"

"None of your business what I intended!" yells Freckles to Jim. And he picks up a clod of dirt and nearly hits Jim with it, and runs. And we all run.

And then began a time of disgrace for Freckles and me such as I never hope to live through again. For the next thing, those two boys that had been his friends was both dancing round him laughing and calling him Mr. H. Watson; and by the time we got down to the part of Main Street where the stores are, every boy and every dog in town was dancing around Freckles and hearing all about it and yelling, "H. Watson! Mr. H. Watson! Is it your own blood? Is it your own blood, Mister H. Watson?"

**F**RECKLES and I did the best we could, fighting all that was our size and some bigger; but after a couple of hours it got so that most anyone could lick us. Kids that was afraid to stand up to him the day before could lick him easy, by now, and dogs I had always despised even to argue with began to get my number. All you could hear, on every side, was: "Is it your own blood, Mr. Watson?"

And at noon we went home, but Freckles didn't go into the house for dinner at all. Instead, he went out to the barn and laid down in the hay, and I crawled in there with him. And he cried and cried and choked and choked. I felt sorry for him, and crawled up and licked his face. But he took me by the scruff of the neck and slung me out of the hay-mow. When I crawled back again, he kicked me in the ribs, but he had on tennis shoes and it didn't hurt much, and anyhow I forgave him. And I went and crawled back to where he was and nuzzled my head up under his armpit. And then he cried harder and hugged me and said I was the best dog in the world and the only friend he ever had.

And then I licked his face again and he let me and we both felt better, and pretty soon he went to sleep there and slept for an hour or so, with his head on my ribs, and I lay there quiet so as not to wake him. Even when a flea got me, I let that flea bite and didn't scratch for fear of waking him. But after a while that flea got tired of me, and crawled over onto Freckles, and he waked natural. And when he waked, he was hungry, but he didn't want to go into the house for fear the story had spread to the grown-ups and he would have to answer questions. So he found a couple of raw turnips, and ate them, and a couple of apples, only they were green, and he milked the cow a little into an old tin cup and drank that. And in a little while he begins to have pains, and he thinks he is getting heart's disease and is really going to die, but he says to himself out loud if he dies now

he won't get any credit for it, and he would have enjoyed it more if he had died while he still thought *Little Eva* was young and beautiful and probably going to marry him in the end.

But after a while it seems turning from heart's disease into some kind of stomach-trouble; so he drinks some stuff out of a bottle that was left in the barn last spring when Bessie, the old roan mare, had the colic, and whether it is heart's disease or stomach-trouble, that stuff cures him. And him and me drift along downtown again to see if maybe the kids have sort of begun to forget about it a little.

But they hadn't. It had even spread to some of the grown-ups. We went into Freckles' father's drugstore, and Mr. Watson told Freckles to step around to the post office and ask for his mail. And the clerk in the post office when we come in, looks at Freckles very solemn and says:

"Ah, here is Mr. H. Watson, after a letter! Will you have a letter written in blood?"

So Freckles told his dad there wasn't any mail, and we sneaked along home again. That night at supper I was lying on the porch just outside the dining-room, and the doors were open, and I heard Freckles' dad say:

"Harold, would you like to go to the show to-night?"

"No, pa," says Freckles.

His mother says that is funny; it is the first time she ever heard him refuse to go to a show of any kind. And his father asks him if anything special has happened that makes him want to stay away from this particular show. I guess when his father says that, Freckles thinks his father is wise too, so he says he has changed his mind and will go to the show after all. He didn't want any argument.

So him and me sneaks down to the show-grounds again. It is getting dark, but too early for the show, and every kid we know is hanging around outside. And what Freckles has had to stand for in the way of kidding beforehand is nothing to what comes now. For they all gets around him in a ring and shouts: "Here is the bridegroom! Here is Mr. H. Watson come to get married to *Little Eva*! And the wedding-invitations are wrote in his own blood! His own blood!"

And the grown-ups beginning to go into the show all tell each other what the kids are getting at, and we hear them laughing to each other about it. Him and me was about the two downest tail-and-head-hangingest persons you ever saw. But we stayed. There wasn't no place else to go.

**R**IGHT in the midst of all the yelling and jostling around, a kid about Freckles' size comes out of the show-tent and walks over to the bunch and says:

"Now, then, what's all this yelling about *Little Eva* for?"

All the kids shut up, and this show kid says to Freckles:

"Was they yelling bridegroom at you?"

Freckles, he was down, but he wasn't going to let any out-of-town boy get away with anything, either. All our own gang had him licked and disgraced, and he knew it; but this was a stranger.

"S'pose they was yelling bridegroom at me," he says. "Aint they got a right to

yell bridegroom at me if they want to? This is a free country."

"You won't be yelled bridegroom at if I say you won't," says the show-kid.

"I'll be yelled bridegroom at for all of you," says Freckles. "What's it to you?"

"You won't be yelled bridegroom at about my mother," says the show-kid.

"Who's being yelled bridegroom at about your mother?" says Freckles. "I'm being yelled at about *Little Eva*."

"Well, then," says this kid, "*Little Eva* is my mother, and you got to stop being yelled at about her."

"Well, then," says Freckles, "you just stop me being yelled at if you think you're big enough."

"I could lick two your size," says the show-kid. "But I won't fight here. I won't fight in front of this crowd. If I was to fight here, your crowd might jump onto me too, and I would maybe have to use brass knucks, and if I was to use brass knucks, I would likely kill some one and be arrested for it. I'll fight in private like a duel, as gentlemen ought to."

"Well, then," says Freckles, "if anyone was to use brass knucks on me, I would have to use brass knucks on them, and I won't fight anyone that uses brass knucks in private."

"Well, then," says the show-kid, "my brass knucks is in my trunk in the tent, and you don't dast to follow me and fight with bare fists."

"My brass knucks is at home," says Freckles, which was the first I knew he ever had any, "and I do dast."

So each one searched the other for brass knucks, and they went off together, me following. The fight was to be under the bridge over the crick down by the school-house on the edge of the woods. But when they got down there, the strip of sand by the side of the crick was in shadow. So they went on top of the bridge, to fight in the moonlight. But the moonlight was so bright they were afraid they would be seen by some farmer coming into town and maybe told on and arrested. So they sat down on the edge of the bridge with their feet hanging over and talked about where they had better fight to be private, as gentlemen should. And they got to talking of other things. And pretty soon they began to kind of like each other, and Freckles says to him:

"What's your name?"

"Percy," says the show-kid. "But you better not call me that. I'd fight if I was called that out of the family. Call me Spike. What's your name?"

"Well, then," says Freckles, "I don't like mine either; mine is Harold. But call me Freckles."

Spike says he wished he had more freckles himself. But he don't get much chance for freckles, he says; his mother takes such awful good care of all the complexions in their family.

"Well, then," says Freckles, "I think your mother is an awful nice lady."

Spike, all of a sudden, busts out crying then and says how would Freckles like it if people wrote notes to his mother and was yelled at about her?

"Spike," he says, "you tell your mother I take it all back. You tell her I was in love with her till I seen her plain old stage, and since I have seen her and her





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family plain, I don't care two cents for her. And I'll write her an apology for falling into love with her."

Which he done it, then and there, in the moonlight, jabbing his fountain pen into his wart, and it read:

*Dear Little Eva. Since I seen your husband and son I decided not to say anything about matrimony, and beg your pardon for it. This too is wrote in my blood and sets you free to fall in love with who you please. You are older and look different from what I expected, and so let us forget by-gones.*

*Yours truly*

H. Watson.

## LUCY—WILDCAT

(Continued from page 78)

attack in combat. Her game was to keep on top of him, clawing at his eyes and throat, and biting at his head, while he tried frantically to get her down, to throw her for a bite at her throat. He couldn't do it, and it was already a badly used up dog that was fighting for its life now in behind the grape-vine when Solon, guided by the yowls and spits and bays of the combat, came plunging up the pasture through the snow, calling frantically to the dog to come out.

When he drew near, Solon hesitated about drawing nearer. The sounds issuing from the cleft were not reassuring, even to a man with a gun, and Solon was not a hunter, anyhow. But he did love his Rhode Island Reds, and he did rather care for his dog, and he did relish five dollars, which was the bounty on cats. So finally he approached close to the opening, and peered in, gun thrust forward, cocked. But he couldn't tell which was dog and which was wildcat—or not for long enough to fire. Again he yelled at his dog. The dog tried to back out, but the grape-vine caught him. The cat was following him up, striking at his face, but was protected from the gun by his body.

It was only at that instant that Lucy really became aware of Solon, and suddenly she seemed to rise right through the grape-vine, coming straight at Solon's head. He emitted a yell that would have done credit to Lucy herself, and jumped to one side. At the same instant the gun went off. The flame singed Lucy's coat, but did her no other harm. She missed Solon by about the same margin as he missed her, landed on the snow, whirled like a flash of light, and was off up the hill. The poor dog tried to follow,—he was game, whatever his breed,—but it wasn't in him any more. Presently he rejoined his master at the bottom of the pasture, and the two of them went limply home.

Solon, naturally, never told a soul but his wife about this incident. Yet as such things happen, it mysteriously became known. Lucy's fame rose another notch—and Solon set up the hard cider.

**A**BOUT that time Lucy moved. She wished to bring up her kittens in a less dangerous spot, where the sins of the parent wouldn't be visited upon them, and where, also, their father wouldn't be

"Spike," says Freckles, when they were walking back to town together, chewing licorice and pretending it was tobacco, "do you really have some brass knucks?"

"No," says Spike. "Do you, Freckles?"

"No," says Freckles.

And they went back to the tent together and asked the gang if they wanted any of their game, and nobody did, and the disgrace lifted.

And I felt so good about that and the end of the love-affair and everything, that right then and there I hunted up that Burning Deck dog and give him the licking of his life, which I had never been able to do before.

fussing around. So she trotted in the night far across the river into the hills to the east, where there was no big mountain such as she had left, but miles of scrubby woods and rocks and small cliffs full of dens, and only a few scattered farms and small upland hamlets, ruins of what a hundred years ago had been prosperous villages.

Here Lucy spent a happy and contented summer and reared a fine family. The hunting was so good that summer that Lucy had no occasion to risk a chicken raid, or to try again the dubious experiment of tackling a fawn. There were plenty of rabbits, grouse, mice and other small things, and after she left her kittens and the winter colds came on, Lucy was stout and sleek, with a fine, thick coat.

But with the accumulation of the snow, the burrowing in of the woodchucks, and more or less of the mice, the departure of many of the birds, and the keen competition with the craftier foxes for the game that remained, Lucy found the pickings scanty again, and began to move about. She grew bold once more, and twice raided chicken-yards, leaving her telltale track in the snow. Traps began to be set for her, and hunts were organized; but she managed to escape the traps, and she outran the dogs, and the end of the winter found her ready to rear a second family in a big, hollow fallen hemlock up a steep ravine in the back hill country not far from a tumble-down farm or two.

No one suspected Lucy's presence there, least of all old man Parmalee, who left most of the farming to his son, but still went out for the cows every night to the pasture which led up the slope and met the ravine woods where Lucy had placed her den. It was a wet, chilly May evening, later than his usual time, when old man Parmalee, waking from a doze, realized that he hadn't been for the cows, doubtless because his son and daughter-in-law hadn't got back from the village to remind him of his duties. He got up hastily, looked for a rain-coat, couldn't find one, and seized a rag rug from the floor, wrapping it around his aged shoulders and hurrying forth.

To his surprise the cows were not at the bars. No telling what that old Jersey will do, he thought, when you wait too long—probably led the rest up the





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hill. Well, he'd get a scolding sure if he didn't go fetch 'em down. So he plodded up the slope, the rain dripping from the rug on his shoulders, and treading hoofprints by the ravine into which the water had not yet settled, he knew the cows had just gone up there. He trudged on into the dimness of the wet woods, calling, "Coo-boss, coo-boss!" over and over.

He had gone, it seemed to him, a long way, and was nearing the old fallen hemlock which he remembered from other years, when he heard a sudden snarl which froze his blood; then he saw the green flash of two eyes, and made out a dim form stalking toward him. Old man Parmalee's legs grew miraculously twenty years younger. He turned and fled down the ravine, tripping on roots, catching at trees with his hands to steady himself, forgetting entirely his rug, which flew off behind, forgetting the cows, forgetting everything but home.

He panted down the pasture, not daring to look behind, and almost fell into the dooryard, where his son and daughter-in-law were just getting out of the buggy.

"What the—"

"Father, what's the—"

"Wildcat—chased me—up the ravine—came right at me—" the old man panted.

His son roared with unseemly mirth, but the woman, with a look of alarm, felt of the old man's wet back, and led him into the house.

"You'll feel better soon," she said.

Then she glanced at the floor.

"Why, where's the red and blue rug?"

"Tarnation! I wore it—couldn't find my old coat—must 'a' dropped it when the cat chased me. Martha made that rug, too. Tarnation, my old army pants was the blue in it."

"Where's the cows?" said young Parmalee brusquely.

The old man gestured feebly. His legs had grown old again now, and were trembling.

"Up the ravine," he said. "You'll hev to go get 'em. I wont. The cat's by that old fell-down hemlock. If you see my rug, bring it back."

"Hang your old rug!" said his son crossly, stamping out.

Fifteen minutes later he also returned, panting.

"D'yer git my rug?" the old man asked. "D'yer git all the cows—the old Jersey too?"

Young Parmalee gasped for breath. "I never see such a big cat!" he finally exclaimed.

"Believe me now, do yer?" the old man cackled. "But why didn't yer pick up my rug?" He spoke plaintively, but there was the hint of a twinkle in his watery blue eyes.

At ten o'clock the cows came back to the bars and woke the family up. It was after eleven before they were milked, and young Parmalee back in bed again. He retired with anything but kindly feelings toward Lucy.

THE cows were not turned out the next morning, but early the second morning Lucy, returning to the den, heard suspicious sounds in the pasture, drawing nearer. She roused the kittens,

drove them out of their warm, dead-leaf and wood-mold bed in the log, and began leading them rapidly up the rocks. But the dogs behind moved more rapidly. They picked up the fresh scent at the den, and suddenly their deep, rather mournful slow baying (not the quick, excited baying they use on a fox-track) told her they were on her heels. At the top of the hill they were almost on her. She cuffed the three kittens under a rock, and turned to fight. Alone, she could have escaped, no doubt. At any rate, she had more than once in the past. But now she had her kittens to defend. There were two dogs, one a bit ahead of the other. As the first drew near, she sprang, landing on his back, and had gouged his eye and torn both ears before the other hound closed in.

Even the two of them, however, had all they could manage, and a bit more. Lucy was alive at both ends, and contrived to fight with her powerful hind legs into the face of one dog, while she rode the other. Clutch after frantic clutch by the hounds was rewarded only with mouthfuls of fur, and a tearing scratch in the face. The three of them rolled and fought and barked and screamed and snarled and spit down the rocks, till the heads and shoulders of two men appeared, coming from below. Then a sudden shot rang out, and Lucy rose convulsively and fell limp between the dogs, which the men caught quickly by the collars and pulled away.

The owner of the dogs examined her, rolling her over with his foot.

"By gum, it's Lucy!" he exclaimed. "Well, she lived up to her reputation to the end."

The battered dogs were sniffing up the trail again now, and barking at the crevice where the kittens had crept in. The men pulled them off some way to one side, and waited. Presently the kittens came creeping out. They were pretty little things, and meowed plaintively for their mother.

"There's fifteen dollars more," said the hunter to young Parmalee. "You take the light one, I'll take the dark. We'll let the dogs run the third."

They fired, and two kittens fell. The third, with a frightened meow, scampered up the rocks and made for a tree.

"Go to it," said the hunter to his dogs.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Parmalee. "Call 'em back."

The man called, getting them to return with difficulty. "What's the big idea?" he demanded. "Five bucks is five bucks, aint it?"

"I'm satisfied—that's all," Parmalee retorted. "The old cat chased Father and me the other night, and fought two dogs this morning, all for those kittens. Let one of 'em live, I say."

The other man shrugged his shoulders. "It's your land," he said. "But they're bad animals, and five dollars is—"

Parmalee picked up the two dead kittens, stroking their warm fur with his hand. The hunter slung Lucy over his shoulder.

"Twenty-eight pounds, if she's an ounce," he said.

The dogs, with their bleeding muzzles, sniffed at her limply dangling tail as they all descended the pasture.

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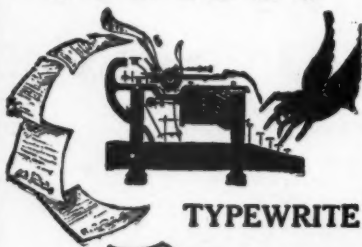
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## A DAUGHTER OF DISCONTENT

(Continued from page 28)

who was heir apparent to the Islip fortune and prerogatives. It was an exciting pastime—and not so absurd as it might have been, she told herself. Had not very wealthy young men been captured before her day by beauty? Were there not many women in all parts of the world who occupied lofty social positions and enjoyed great wealth—because Nature had given them beauty?

For a girl of twenty-two Jane was singularly lacking in the romantic impulse. She did not concern herself with the delights of love. It never occurred to her, at this stage of her progress, that she herself might find difficulty in controlling her heart; nor did she require of Cleghorn Islip that he be a young man who could compel her love. As she saw it, it was purely a matter of business. She wanted such and such things; the way to obtain such and such things was to attract a man who could give them to her.

The fact of the matter was that she was little acquainted with romance. Her life had been spent in an atmosphere of social propaganda. The conversations she heard in her father's house did not touch upon the romantic; the books on her father's shelves contained no romance; she had known few girl friends with whom to speculate and dream; and no young man had come courting. She had known no men—only social theorists who were somehow sexless, bearded, intense, automatic. As a result of her constricted life and peculiar education, she knew nothing about love; nor had she learned to look forward to it as most young girls look forward to it as the great and beautiful and most desirable thing in life. A great many girls begin falling in love at the age of ten and continue falling in love until the flame is quenched in the comradeship or the disillusionment of marriage. Jane Lang had never yet been attracted to boy or man—or felt the desire to be attracted.

TWO weeks passed. Abner Islip went to New York to meet his son, and returned. Jane knew that Cleghorn had returned with him, but he had not been visible. And then, abruptly, as was his custom in everything, he appeared.

Abner Islip's door opened as if pushed by an impatient foot, and a young man entered as though on the follow-through of the push. He was three strides into the office before he stopped and perceived that Chagnon was not there.

"Where's Finney?" he asked abruptly, hardly glancing at Jane, who was at her typewriting machine.

"He went out with Mr. Islip," said Jane, scrutinizing the young man, his tanned face with its rather large blue eyes which gave him an expression of good-natured boyishness even younger than his years. She recognized him instantly.

Cleghorn turned and looked at Jane as she spoke; then, bending from the waist with an elaborate burlesque bow, he said: "How do you do? And when did you come? And welcome!"

Jane laughed. His manner was whimsical, irresponsible, charming—and laughable.

"You raise old Finney's batting average for stenographers," Cleghorn said. "Up to now he has batted about one-thirty-three. I've looked 'em all over, and I know. Before I take my pencil in hand to figure, I know you raise it to four hundred—which is good in this league."

Jane wished he had said something to which there could have been a reply, but what reply could there be to this flippancy? Obviously he expected none, for he asked immediately: "Are you by any chance permanent?"

"I hope so."

"In that case I shall have to ask you your name. I might wait for Finney to introduce us, but that wastes time. My name is Islip—Cleg for short. I'll be around here a lot, and I can't call you Say."

"My name is Lang," Jane said.

"First, last or middle?"

"Jane Lang."

"Easy to spell. That's fine. I'm a rotten speller."

He stepped to the door and called: "Hey, Weeks, come in here. Want you to meet my friend Miss Lang." And then, as a slightly older young man became visible, Cleghorn performed the introduction with mock formality.

Ledyard acknowledged the introduction stiffly. He seemed uneasy, displeased at Cleghorn's manner. The situation rendered him uncomfortable. As for Jane, she was really embarrassed, as much by Ledyard's manner as by Cleghorn's irresponsibility. Both young men were looking at her, and she felt like an exhibit. There seemed to be no defense against Cleghorn's good-natured flippancy. It seemed so without intention and spontaneous—mere boyish high spirits. There did not seem to be reason to squelch him as she had squelched other young men about the office; she could not reply to flippancy with flippancy, because instinctively she felt the questionable taste of that, and that such a manifestation would leave an unpleasant impression of her with young Islip. She wished Chagnon would come back.

"I am very busy," she said quietly.

Cleghorn turned quickly to Ledyard. "Come on," he said, taking his friend's arm. "Let's get it over with." At the door he stopped suddenly, remembering Jane. "Au revoir, ma'm'selle," he said.

"Much obliged to you for working here."

They passed into the adjoining room.

### CHAPTER III

WEEKS LEDYARD had met Abner Islip in his home, to which he had been taken as a guest by young Cleghorn; his sensations now were totally different: he was encountering Islip as a business man, in the office from which, one might say, he regulated the meals of the world. The conception was like the blow of a



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fist. It jarred him, made him gasp. Here was a man that he could destroy with one hand—yet that same bent figure could, by dictating a few words to a stenographer, bring about plenty or starvation at the end of the earth. Weeks wondered how a man possessed of that power could feel. Or, he asked himself, had the power become so matter-of-course that it gave no sensation whatever?

"My son says you want to get into business in Chicago," said Islip abruptly, omitting any other salutation. "Why?"

"Because I believe the opportunities in Chicago are greater than anywhere else on earth."

"Why?"

"I believe Chicago to be the most important city in the world."

"Do you really believe that?" Islip asked, and Weeks sensed a gratification, a pleasure in the man's tone. "You have been thinking. Give me your line of reasoning."

Weeks obeyed without hesitation, because he felt that Islip was really interested, actually curious. "It is a matter of history," he said. "The history of civilizations is the history of valleys. Almost every great national supremacy has been based upon a fertile valley—the Tigris and the Euphrates, the Nile, the Yang-tse-kiang. A few states have rested upon maritime power—Tyre, Carthage, England. I believe it is the turn of the Mississippi Valley. Power and wealth have been moving westward. The war has thrown them westward suddenly. Today the greatest center of production, of earth-production, in the world is the Valley of the Mississippi, and Chicago is its portal. It is backed by a valley and is a port as Tyre was a port and as Liverpool is a port."

"The world is looking to America. America is unhurt by the war. It has wealth, infinite possibilities, dominant possibilities. I believe America has reached a position of dominating importance in the affairs of the world—and it is because of the Mississippi Valley and its resources that she has done so."

Abner Islip nodded his head, and eyed Weeks with growing interest.

"You have vision," Islip said, half to himself. Then came a flash of enthusiasm. "You are right. We have a marvelous country. I have studied it, and I know. God made the world. He made the other continents and countries first, and into each of them he put many good things. He was educating himself, learning how to make a country. Last of all he made America, and he knew how. He gave us everything. He made us self-sufficient, gave us everything a people can want—all the climates, all the contours, all the physical benefits to be found on earth; and then he arranged it so we could grow everything we need—everything except tea!"

**W**EEKS was obsessed by a sense that here was a man who was at heart an enthusiast, a dreamer, but whose enthusiasm had been imprisoned and suppressed, whose dreams had been quenched by the exigencies of his contacts. He conceived that here was a man who might have painted a great picture, or conceived a great idea, but that the great painting

or the great idea lay imprisoned under the golden weight of hundreds of millions of dollars. He found himself not only liking Abner Islip, but feeling sorry for him.

"You want to work for me?" Islip said with his customary abruptness. It was customary, Weeks was to learn. The man sheared away pretense and the underbrush of inconsequentiality, arriving sometimes startlingly at the gist of the matter.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Food," said Weeks, with something of Islip's abruptness.

"The war has made dealing in food the most important business on earth—has made us realize its importance, at any rate. Not necessarily the producing of food, the raising of crops and the grazing of cattle, but the preparation of raw food-stuffs for consumption, and most dominating of all, the transporting and distribution of food to the stomachs of the world."

"Right. Due to the complexity of our civilization. My father started this business with a hog. He was a butcher's boy. He saved his wages and bought a hog. Slaughtered it himself, back in New England, and peddled the meat among his neighbors. It was the peddling idea that founded this business—the getting of the food to the consumer. What are you interested in primarily?"

Weeks considered a moment. "Men," he replied presently.

"Socialist?"

"No."

"I have some ideas—" Abner Islip, or so it seemed to Weeks Ledyard, suppressed the dreamer within him. "It is impossible for me to know all about the hundred thousand men who work for me in various parts of the world—even about the twenty or thirty thousand people who work for me here. Things occur. A committee of men waited on me the other day—prepared for trouble. They told me my engineers were working twelve hours a day, two shifts of twelve hours. 'What are you going to do about it?' the spokesman asked me. 'From this minute,' I told them, 'they are working three shifts of eight hours. I didn't know this condition. I cannot be expected to correct a condition of which I am ignorant.' They went away satisfied. You have handled men. My son tells me many things about you in army life. I need eyes to see these conditions, and a man with the ability to handle them. If this would appeal to you—"

"Personnel officer translated into the world of business?"

"Exactly."

"You are offering me this place?"

"Yes. Salary six thousand a year. Is it satisfactory?"

"Perfectly."

"When will you take up your work?"

"Now."

Islip nodded again, as if making some private mental note.

"It is a new position. There is no system. You will have to create your work. One thing I wish to direct, and that is to be fair—fair to me and fair to the men. I am giving directions that you shall always have instant access to me. I think we understand each other, and that you know what I want. Do it—without



# New Stomachs for Old In 48 Hours

By R. S. Thompson

**T**HOUSANDS of people who suffered for years with all sorts of stomach trouble are walking around today with entirely remade stomachs—stomachs which have been remade in from 43 to 72 hours! They enjoy their meals and never have a thought of indigestion, constipation or any of the serious illnesses with which they formerly suffered and which are directly traceable to the stomach.

And these surprising results have been produced not by drugs or medicines of any kind, not by foregoing substantial foods, not by eating specially prepared or patented foods of any kind, but by eating the plainest, simplest foods *correctly combined!*

These facts were forcibly brought to my mind by Eugene Christian, the eminent Food Scientist, who is said to have successfully treated over 23,000 people with foods alone!

As Christian says, man is what he *eats*. What we take into our stomachs today, we are tomorrow. Food is the source of all power, yet not one person in a hundred knows the chemistry of foods as related to the chemistry of the body. The result is we are a nation of "stomach sufferers."

Christian has proved that to eat good, simple, nourishing food is not necessarily to eat correctly. In the first place, many of the foods which we have come to regard as good are in reality about the worst things we can eat, while others that we regard as harmful have the most food value.

But perhaps the greatest harm which comes from eating blindly is the fact that very often two perfectly good foods when eaten at the same meal form a chemical reaction in the stomach and literally explode, liberating dangerous toxic poisons which are absorbed by the blood and circulate throughout the system, forming the root of all or nearly all sickness, the first indications of which are acidity, fermentation, gas, constipation and many other sympathetic ills leading to most serious consequences.

And yet just as wrong food selections and combinations will destroy our health and efficiency, so will the right foods quickly create and maintain bodily vigor and mental energy. In my talk with Eugene Christian, he told me of some of his experiences in the treatment of disease through food—just a few instances out of the more than 23,000 cases he has on record.

One case which interested me greatly was that of a young business man whose efficiency had been practically wrecked through stomach acidity, fermentation and constipation, resulting in physical sluggishness which was naturally reflected in his ability to use his mind. He was twenty pounds under weight when he first went to see Christian and was so nervous he couldn't sleep. Stomach and intestinal gases were so severe that they caused irregular heart action and often fits of great mental de-

pression. As Christian describes it, he was not 50 per cent efficient either mentally or physically. Yet in 24 hours, by following Christian's suggestions as to food, his constipation was relieved, although he had formerly been in the habit of taking large daily doses of a strong cathartic. In five weeks every abnormal symptom had disappeared—his weight having increased 6 lbs. In addition to this, he acquired a store of physical and mental energy so great in comparison with his former self as to almost belie the fact that it was the same man.

Another instance of what proper food combinations can do almost overnight was that of a man one hundred pounds overweight whose only other discomfort was rheumatism. This man's greatest pleasure in life was eating. Though convinced of the necessity, he hesitated for months to go under treatment, believing he would be deprived of the pleasures of the table. He finally, however, decided to try it out. Not only did he begin losing weight within a few hours, regaining his normal figure in a matter of weeks, but all signs of rheumatism disappeared, and he found the new diet far more delicious to the taste and afforded a much keener quality of enjoyment than his old method of eating, and wrote Christian a letter to that effect.

But perhaps the most interesting case that Christian told me of was that of a multi-millionaire—a man 70 years old, who had been traveling with his doctor for several years in a search for health. He was extremely emaciated, had chronic constipation, lumbago, and rheumatism. For over twenty years he had suffered with stomach and intestinal trouble which in reality was superabundant secretions in the stomach. The first menus given him were designed to remove the causes of acidity, which was accomplished almost overnight. And after this was done he seemed to undergo a complete rejuvenation. His eyesight, hearing, taste, and all of his mental faculties became keener and more alert. He had had no organic trouble—but he was starving to death from malnutrition and decomposition—all caused by the wrong selection and combination of foods. Almost immediately after following Christian's advice this man could see results, and after six months he was as well and strong as he had ever been in his life.

These instances of the efficacy of right eating I have simply chosen at random from perhaps a dozen Eugene Christian told me of, every one of which was fully as interesting, and they applied to as many different ailments. Surely this man Christian is doing a great work.

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These lessons, there are 24 of them, contain actual menus for breakfast, luncheon, and dinner, covering every condition of health and sickness from infancy to old age and for all occupations, climates, and seasons.

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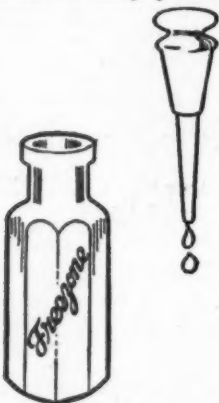
With these lessons at hand it is just as though you were in personal contact with the great food specialist, because every possible point is so thoroughly covered that you can scarcely think of a question which isn't answered. You can start eating the very things that will produce the increased physical and mental energy you are seeking the day you receive the lessons, and you will find that you secure results with the first meal. This, of course, does not mean that complicated illnesses can be removed at one meal, but it does mean that real results can nearly always be seen in 48 hours or less.

If you would like to examine these 24 little Lessons in *Corrective Eating*, simply write The Corrective Eating Society, Department 1201, 443 Fourth Avenue, New York City. It is not necessary to enclose any money with your request. Merely ask them to send the lessons on five days' trial, with the understanding that you will either return them within that time or remit \$3.50, the small fee asked.

The reason that the Society is willing to send the lessons on free examination without money in advance is because they want to remove every obstacle to putting this knowledge in the hands of the many interested people as soon as possible, knowing full well that a test of some of the menus in the lessons themselves is more convincing than anything that can possibly be said about them.

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coming to me if you are sure—after consultation with me, if you are not sure."

"Yes sir."

"THERE is a thing called Bolshevism abroad in the world," said Islip then, abruptly.

"Yes sir."

"It will not succeed in America."

"Why?"

"Because we men who employ great numbers of laborers will not permit it: The brains are on our side. Lenin and Trotzky had to rely on bourgeois brains to continue such operations as have continued. We will make Bolshevism impossible by making our employees contented—by being fair with them."

"By beating the Bolsheviks to it," said Weeks.

"Exactly. Big business is suffering today for sins committed twenty years ago. It is justice. Business to-day is not as business was twenty years ago. But it will take another twenty years to convince the people; it will be another twenty years before big business can reap the rewards of its reformation. Even ten years ago, when I came to work in the morning, the first thing I gave my attention to was the balance-sheet. Now it is the last thing I consider. That is indicative. We have come to realize that we are not running our businesses for profit alone, perhaps not even primarily for profit, but for the common good. We are necessary. Conditions have made us necessary, and we know now that we are responsible to life for our acts. The war has done much to convince us that we must think first of the common good."

Weeks was amazed. Islip leaned back in his chair and went on as if talking to himself.

"I have wealth and power," Islip said slowly. "I am accustomed to them, have never known anything else. From boyhood I have known I was to succeed to this place some day. So I cannot appreciate what these things might mean to somebody else. I have never known what it was to be without them. I have great power, but it means little to me. I am very rich, but what does it buy me except three meals a day, a suit of clothes when I need it, and such pleasures after working hours as I can enjoy? That is all. The rest, somehow, doesn't signify. It is all a matter of course with me, and consequently I am unable to grasp always the viewpoint of the man who does not possess power and wealth. I am telling you these things so you will understand what I want you to do."

"I think I understand."

"I want you to visit our packing-houses, our elevators, our markets. I want you to know about our lines of refrigerator-cars, and our lines of steamships. Put in a month studying the business. Go every-

where. Then come back and tell me what you think. The employees must have confidence in you. You represent them as much as you represent me. I want to do right." He paused a moment and half shut his eyes. "You do not know how difficult it is for a man in my position to do right—because the truth does not come to me. Bring me the truth. Will you ask Chagnon to come to me, son?"

Chagnon appeared in the door presently. "This is Mr. Ledyard, Chagnon, our new personnel officer. See to it that he has an office with what equipment and assistants he wishes, in this suite—also another office at the plant. Give orders that he is to have instant access to me, no matter how I am engaged, at all times." He turned to Ledyard, but did not extend his hand. "Good morning," he said, and returned to his desk, apparently sweeping Ledyard, his son and the whole affair from his mind.

In the passageway outside the door Cleghorn shook hands with his friend.

"Well," he said, "we pulled it off. Satisfied?"

"More than satisfied. I can't tell you how—"

"Then don't try. Wait a second. I want to take another look at that girl of Chagnon's. What a smashing beauty! I like 'em beautiful, and the more beautiful, the more I like 'em."

"I've got to get to work," Ledyard said. Then he hesitated a bit awkwardly. "It has been mighty good of you to bring me out here and arrange this thing. We have been rather good friends in France, but—well, the war is over—"

"What d'you mean? Going to throw me over now?" Cleghorn inquired laughingly.

"Things are different," Weeks replied. "I'm not rich enough to go on being friends with you. I can't run with your set—can't afford it. I just want you to understand, and to know that I understand. I don't expect you to bother about me, and as things are, I think it would be best if you didn't have me meet your crowd or ask me to run around with them. I don't belong. . . . You see it, don't you?"

"Darned if I do."

"You will. It isn't that I don't want your friendship; you know that. But I'm your father's hired man, and some day I'll be yours. I think it will be best if we let things go—drop things where they are."

"Fiddlesticks! I won't have anything of the sort."

WEEKS saw it was futile to persist, but knew, as Cleghorn did not, the impossibility of continued intimacy between them. He shrugged his shoulders mentally, feeling that conditions would inevitably cause their paths to diverge.

"I must see Mr. Chagnon," he said.

"And I must see Miss Lang," said Cleghorn.

The younger man opened the private secretary's door. "Here we are, back again," he said gayly. "Ledyard on business, and I on pleasure. Fair division! Go fuss with Chagnon, Weeks, while I charm Miss Lang."

Weeks took a chair by Chagnon's desk;

"DEVIL'S GOLD"  
is the title of one of the most remarkable stories  
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has ever written. It will appear in the  
February issue of  
THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



# A New Idea that Makes Men Rich

**SEVEN men tried out this idea. Each was earning less than \$40.00 a week in a routine position. To-day five of these men draw salaries ranging from \$8,000 to \$40,000 a year, the sixth is wealthy, and the seventh is worth a half-million dollars. How they did it, and how you, too, can duplicate their amazing success**

**YOU** men and women who are eager for success—I wish you could have been with me one memorable evening last week. For then I had spread before me seven of the most remarkable cases of success of which I've ever heard.

It all came about in this way. At a convention in New York I met two old friends who had at one time worked for the same firm. Each of these men had since won remarkable success. As we sat in my room at the hotel, my two friends—Perry and Gordon—got to talking about old times and the men they used to work with.

The talk turned to what their former associates were doing now. "Let's see," said Gordon, "there's Bill Bailey—now he's vice-president of a bank at \$10,000 a year. Lawrence is general manager of a machinery house at \$18,000 a year. Yawman is foreign Sales Manager for an automobile concern and makes \$40,000 a year. Stanton is manager of the New York branch and last year made in salary and commissions over \$28,000. Burton is in the wholesale business for himself and tells me that in the past three years he has cleaned up a fortune. Even old Harry Carter, whom everybody thought a dud, is Secretary of a concern down south and knocks out \$8,000 a year. And Zimmerman, our old boss, is director of more concerns than I can think of and is rolling in money."

"**FUNNY thing,**" said Perry, "every man who worked in that department under Jim has made a conspicuous success. It is the ordinary course of events you'd naturally expect one or two of the men to win out while the others would plug along and never amount to anything unusual. But every one of these men has since made a name for himself. I wonder if it just happened or if there is a reason."

"I used to think about that a lot myself," cut in Gordon, "and I believe I've found the answer. It's Jim, our old chief. That's who we've all got to thank for our success. 'Remember what a slave driver we used to think him. When he wanted a thing done he'd tell us some of the most impossible things, and he made us do them. Excuses didn't go. We nicknamed him 'Old Mt. t.' Must do this—must do that. No excuses. Simply must do it. We knew it couldn't be done. Yet we got it done—always!'"

"We couldn't kick because he loved himself as much as he drove us. Remember the line of talk he used to hand us day in and day out? 'It must be done. You can do it. Go. a step on yourselves, boys. Throw your Will into

action. Drive! Will-power will carry you through.'

"I never took much stock in that Will call those days. I thought it was just one of Jim's pet theories. But now I see that Jim was right—wonderfully right."

"The reason why our department always broke records, and why every man in that department has since made a big success is because Jim put the drive into us—he taught us how to use our Will-power. That's what put us all where we are—the winning drive that comes from Will-power."

**WHEN** you come right down to it the only real difference between men is not birth nor education nor luck, but Will-power. The successful man is successful because he knows how to use his Will. He compels success. The unsuccessful man is unsuccessful because he does not know how to use his Will and is forced to meekly bow down to circumstances.

Not one man in a hundred knows how to use his Will. That is why more men are not successes. Nearly every successful man has a highly developed Will—the stronger the Will the greater the success. Natural ability amounts to but little unless backed by a dominant, compelling, driving Will.

The Will is the motive power of the brain. Without a highly-trained, inflexible Will, a man has about as much chance of attaining success in life as a locomotive has of crossing the continent without steam. The biggest ideas have no value without Will to "put them over." Yet the Will, although heretofore entirely neglected, can be trained into wonderful power like the brain or memory. And by the very same method—intelligent exercise and use.

If you held your arm in a sling for two years it would become powerless to lift a feather, from lack of use. The same is true of the Will—it becomes weak from lack of use. Because we do not use our Wills properly—because we continually bow down to circumstances—we become unable to assert ourselves. What our Wills need is practice.

Develop your Will-power and money will flow in on you. Rich opportunities will open up for you. Driving energy you never dreamed you had will manifest itself. You will thrill with a new power—a power that nothing can resist. You'll have an influence over people that you never thought possible. Success—in whatever form you want it—will come as easily as failure came before. And those are only a few of the things Will-power will do for you. Just how to develop the Will into a mighty, irresistible force—how to make it do all these

things for you—is fully explained in that wonderful book *Power of Will*.

**SOME** of the things "Power of Will" has done for people are astounding. I would hardly believe them if I hadn't seen them with my own eyes. Adding ten, twenty, thirty or forty dollars a week to a man's income is a mere nothing. That's merely playing at it. In one case I took a rank failure and in a few weeks had him earning as high as \$2,000 a week. Listen to this:

A young man in the East had an article for which there was a nation-wide demand. For twelve years he "puttered around" with it—barely eking out a living. Then he read "Power of Will." Today this young man is worth \$200,000. He is building a \$25,000 home—and has looked upon as a failure. Without work, his children go to private schools. He goes hunting, fishing, traveling, whenever the mood strikes him. His income is over a thousand dollars a week.

In a little town in New York lives a man who two years ago was pitted by all who knew him. From the time he was fourteen he had worked and slaved—and at sixty he was looked upon as a failure. Without work, in debt to his charitable friends, with an invalid son to support, the outlook was pitchy black. About this time he ran across a copy of "Power of Will."

In two weeks he was in business for himself. In three years his plant was working night and day to fill orders. During 1916 the profits were \$20,000. During 1917 the profits ran close to \$40,000. And this genial 64-year-old man is enjoying pleasures and comforts he little dreamed would ever be his.

**AMAZING** things like these *Power of Will* has done for men and women in all walks of life. There is no sound reason why it will not bring about the same surprising results for you. You at least owe it to yourself to find out. And I'm willing to prove it to you wholly at my expense. You can easily make thousands—you can't lose a cent. Here is my offer:

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If you pass this offer by, I'll be out only the small profit on a three and a half dollar sale. But you—may easily be out the difference between what you're now making and an income several times as great. So you see you've a lot—a whole lot—more to lose than I. Mail the coupon or write a letter now—you may never read this offer again.

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**A. S. HINDS**  
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Cleghorn sat on a corner of Jane Lang's. "How about luncheon?" he said.

"I can't lunch with you," she answered quietly.

"Wont you change your mind?"

She shook her head, but she had to smile.

"What days do you change your mind?" demanded Cleghorn. "It has to be done. Nobody should wear the same mind through the week. I send mine to the laundry every day or so."

"I launder my own," Jane said laughingly. "I have to because I haven't another to wear."

"Paste it on the windowpane to dry at night, I suppose?"

"I have a great many letters to write, Mr. Islip."

"And a great deal of time to write them in. You're young, very young. I should say you had fifty years at least ahead of you, and you ought to be able to get out all the letters you need to in half a century."

He was looking at Jane quizzically, yet with growing interest apparent in his irresponsible eyes. Her beauty grew upon him, became more perfect as he scrutinized her with something of the eye of a connoisseur. Taking this girl to lunch suddenly became a project of importance to him—because she declined his attentions.

**W**EEKS LEDYARD had often heard Cleghorn say: "What's the use wanting what you can get? You don't have to want it; you just take it. It's the thing you can't get that you've got to want." It was more or less the life philosophy of this boy at that period of his career. The difficulty, he said, was that there were so few things he couldn't get, and when one came along, he appreciated it and was grateful to it. He regarded it as the major business of his life to get the things that were refused to him.

"My appetite is gone," he said. "It will never come back until you lunch or dine or picnic or browse with me. I shall starve slowly, and fade and die. It will be your fault, and you will lose your job on account of it. My father has a prejudice against people who are to blame for the death of his only son. You'll find out."

"I'm sure walking would give you an appetite—if you tried it *now*," she said, and he laughed, delighted by her manner and by her ability to answer badinage with quasi-serious badinage, holding secure her dignity at the same time.

"I'm going," he said, "but I'm coming back. Good morning, Miss Lang."

He walked over to Chagnon's desk and rested his hand on Ledyard's shoulder. Chagnon looked from him to Miss Lang quickly, and let his eyes drop to his desk. Cleghorn stifled a grin.

"Come along, Weeks," he said. "Leave it to Chagnon—whatever it is. He'll do it. He always has. Reliable old Chag! If he should ever forget anything, or neglect anything, the shock would destroy him."

Weeks was sometimes a bit surprised by his friend's keen perceptions and apt descriptions. This bit of raillery did seem to define Chagnon perfectly.

"The office will be ready for you in the morning, Mr. Ledyard," Chagnon said staidly. "You will want to visit the plant this afternoon?"

"I think so."

"A car will be here at one-thirty to take you out. I will have a note ready for you, introducing you properly. I think that will be all you need."

Ledyard found himself rather liking Chagnon, and then wondering why he did like him. Outwardly he was an immaculate machine, as smooth and polished as if he had newly come from the buffing-wheel. He functioned like an automaton, as an automatic *alter ego* for Abner Islip, submerging his own personality utterly. But Weeks was drawn to him. Apparently Chagnon lacked magnetism, lacked every quality calculated to attract friendship. It was puzzling.

"Come along, Weeks," Cleghorn said. "Leave old Chag to tick along."

THE figure of speech was good. Chagnon did, somehow, make him think of a watch, a watch with a smooth, polished gold case filled with delicately fashioned wheels and pinions and springs, which would tick along neither faster nor slower, always reliably, no matter what might occur.

They went out and down in the elevator. Cleghorn's runabout was waiting at the door, and they drove to the University Club.

"I wonder what possessed old Chag to hire that girl," Cleghorn said presently. "She's something like, and she's got a head to go with it. The difference between talking to most pretty girls and to an oil portrait is that the portrait can't get up and dance with you afterwards."

"This is the first time I was ever in Chicago," Weeks said irrelevantly.

"Once in a while we have a day when it isn't so bad," Cleghorn said, looking out at the murky streets, dark as twilight and heavy with smoke and fog so that the street-lights were glowing dully at mid-day. "I've known the sun to shine. We have a public library and an art museum. I don't know what they use them for. There's a lake down yonder, and the Boul' Miché is a great place for walking."

They ascended to the dining-room, and after lunch Weeks told Cleghorn to run along and play. "I've some letters to write, and I want to get them off this afternoon," he said.

"I'll drop back for you at six-thirty," Cleghorn promised.

"I'd rather you didn't—really. We can't keep it up. You've been more than decent to me, but—we don't belong in the same set. I can't hold cards in your game, Cleg."

"Cinnamon seeds and sandy bottom!" Cleghorn said derisively. "See you later. I've got to find out that Lang girl's address. Hands off."

"I'm not interested," Weeks said, and saying it, told the truth. It is never safe, however, for any young man to predict how much or how little he will continue to be interested in any beautiful girl.

The story of Jane Lang's pursuit of a life of affluence and ease will be continued in the next—the February—issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE.

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## THE SECRET OF

(Continued)

and the tintype of herself, a fat baby. A pair of unworn black kid gloves, a pair of openwork mitts, a silly lace fan with a broken stick beside them.

Who had flirled the fan? Beside the fan was a sacred pile of letters, the yellow papers held together with a thick rubber band.

Trembling as if she were committing a crime, Roberta slipped off that band: two laundry-slips, a ten-year-old milk bill, clippings from the newspapers about the Heppner flood, an unposted picture-postal of the Mormon cathedral at Salt Lake, and several of the girlish scrawls Roberta had mailed home from her convent school. And—nothing else!

It seemed to Roberta that she was about to witness some terrible calamity. She sank terrified upon the floor, wondering where to seek the secret. It was as if Fate, whom she was fighting, who had forced this task upon her, had withdrawn its weapon. She was frightened by the sense of having nothing to contend with. Just the other day her mother's arms had been twisted about that great leather chest there in the corner. Was the secret there, had her mother been warning her not to open that box?

Pushing back her hair with one trembling cold hand, she flung open the chest with the other.

For a long time there was no sound in the room except the sputtering of the candle, except the labored breath of the woman. Slowly from some haunt of memory came the realization of mad laughter—came a vision of a tortured group, herself, her father and her mother, upon the night her grandmother had sought the secret. It was her mad laughter which Roberta heard now, the memory of which kept her from emitting peal after peal of crazed mirth.

The chest was empty. Once more Fate, her adversary, had removed its weapon.

It was a wild game of hide-and-seek which her ancestors were playing upon her, but Roberta had determined to finish it. Quite calmly she went to her mother's closet and peered in. The candle sent shaking shadows creeping along the cedar walls, but Roberta was not looking for shadows now. Her mother's best black silk dress hung before her, and the girl wondered why she had never worn it. Its jet trimmings cast comforting little beams out into the bleak spot; perhaps at some time in her life Roberta's mother had longed to be a plain country woman, the kind to whom just such a dress meant Sunday and church, and the minister at dinner.

And now Roberta saw that the leather portfolio was there in the closet too, the one that contained the thick wallet. Roberta carried it out, and sitting sideways on her chair, gleaned bit by bit the secret.

**T**HE letters, the parchments, the wills, took Roberta some time to read. Once or twice she shivered, and later she drew the patchwork quilt off the bed and



## THE NEALS

from page 48)

pulled it about her shoulders. The story in the old papers seemed to fill the drab room with sea-mist. It turned the dust-filled air into the clean spaces of the ocean; and the wind rattling about the old house standing high on its dry hill was the wind that tossed a tangle of green and blue water about the hull of an old, old ship.

Roberta sat very still, her eyes mere slits in her white face. Once or twice she rubbed her hand across her brow as if to try and make her thoughts come easier. And once she sobbed aloud with the futility of ever understanding the whole tale:

Out of the beyond had come a man named Neal. So much was easy to understand. Yes, out of the beyond had come a man named Neal, sailing away in his own tall, white-sailed ship, sailing here, sailing there, picking up treasure, gathering wealth, taking it home to that proud family of which he was one.

"Ships go down to the sea—and men come back from the sea in twos!" So Roberta's mother had muttered, and so Roberta herself now muttered over and over.

For this gallant man, this knight of the Neals, had been the victim of two of his own crew, two men from his own country, in the land beyond, two brothers named O'Neil.

"And even in the desert you cannot hide away the sins of the sea."

How plain it was all growing now, that quaint old confession, written so long ago, and hidden so well there in the great house on the hill! Who knew of a wreck on the coast, who knew the consequences of that wreck, who cared what caused that wreck? There in that little forgotten trading-station on Deception Bay a ship and its cargo were the main things, not who the people from that ship said they were. Those two brothers O'Neil had come into that harbor one storm-soaked day, cursing the rocks where their ship clung, a wreck. They had talked mightily about the grandeur of the family which was theirs, as was the fortune out there among the waves. How easy it had been to steal a name, there in that new land!

Eagerly the men from that little trading-station had helped those strangers called Neal to bring their treasure ashore, to gather in those sea-chests, slimy and wet, with long green and amber seaweeds clinging to their teak-wood sides. But fear and haunting horror had come in with those old chests, and the men who called themselves Neal were afraid. They were afraid of the sea, afraid of the tall ships that were beginning to come up the coast, afraid of the coming of men who might know them. Deception Bay proved to be the mouth of a great river, and up the river were surely places where one could hide safely. Slowly, taking years to make the trip, squandering their lives in attempts to hide their crime, the two O'Neils wandered up the river.

Into the dry country the two O'Neils traveled, and there they met long trains



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of immigrants who had come over the plains and the mountains. Here, well hidden, they had made their homes.

THESE men who called themselves Neal had used a strange method to hide their crime. They took upon themselves, along with the name of Neal, all the pride and quality which belonged thereto. Here in the strange new land this masque of superior birth somehow gave them honor and distinction.

They kept their secret well, these crafty old men; and they came into the desert bringing wives with them, from a little fur-trading station. And after that there were cousins to marry cousins.

But fear of punishment followed them into the desert, and even into the great houses which they sold treasures to build. For even though they had these houses made so fit to shelter pride and power, they were afraid to give those virtues house-room.

And what of the treasure those two brothers O'Neil had brought into the dry country with them? Every will in the leather portfolio read like another, from that first illiterate scrawl down to the one in the handwriting of Roberta's mother. Every sum of money was the same; it was the same sum stolen nearly a hundred years before, out there in that ship on the broad high seas, as it was in 1910. Roberta read over and over again that she was the sole heir to the sum mentioned in the very first will. For this is the law of the garnerer—you must not spend his gold.

Roberta understood now how it was that every Neal, or O'Neil, worked so willingly at his trade, full of anticipation of the time when he should come into the fortune; how the men of the family had been glad to support the family, to keep up the house on the hill, waiting for the fortune.

What anticipation had been in the minds and heart of her father and grandfather as they waited for their turn at the fortune! And when they had read the wills and understood the secret, it had taken all their meager store of knowledge to live upon the fortune and still garner it, to keep the confession of the sum of the fortune away from that prying little town below the hill. To keep up the masque of plenty, they surreptitiously sold things from those great chests, below there in the hall. Roberta thought this was just another habit of the miser. When once they realized the secret, that they were nobody except the descendants of two evil sea-rovers, they were forced to go on with the deception.

But none of the family had been brave enough to ever go back into the land beyond and claim any of the real wealth that belonged to the Neal family. No, these people on their two dry hills read their wills, found out their secret, and then the habit of pride, the bitterness of discovery, the stinging knowledge that they were nothing more or less than a band of convicts, had taken each possessor of the secret by the throat and strangled all the life and love out of him.

BUT now the family was done—and this last descendant of those rascally old sea-rovers had turned out to be noth-

ing more or less than a frightened girl who had a perfect right to the name of O'Neil.

And still, for pride's sake, for the sake of the blue blood they had never possessed, for the sake of the name to which they had no right, these ancestors of hers were asking Roberta to keep their secret. The last Neal was fighting out her battle just as her mother had fought hers before her. . . .

Hours passed. Dawn, a mass of blurred red under a gray blanket, raised its head in the east. From behind the hill a milk-wagon rattled to town, the driver whistling.

Suddenly Roberta sat up, listening sharply, her face shining as if wonderful knowledge were being given to her. The whistle had brought back that boy, that O'Neil boy who had whistled every day beside her door. She belonged to that boy; she was not a Neal. In truth, her name was O'Neil. The false pride, the crime, the secret of that family called Neal, that make-believe crew, had nothing to do with her. She was an O'Neil!

Roberta O'Neil stood up, a wild, radiant figure there in the early dawn. She stretched her arms above her head in a gesture of freedom, and went swaying, dancing through the long halls. Mockingly she stood before the pictures of the dead and gone O'Neils who had garnered their dab of money and their stolen name. She tossed those old commanding papers up at them, singing joyfully, crazily, a song which meant freedom and peace.

She opened the old wallet and let gold pieces slide from hand to hand. What happiness they could buy, what suffering they could allay! All the crimes of O'Neil would be washed white by the joy that yellow gold would give. She was happy because at last it would be her right to wipe tears away from eyes that sorrowed.

She danced into the dining-room, laughing with joy, her eyes gleaming over the silver and the beautiful dishes. What hungry people would she feed, what little children would come laughing to her door to get a cookie from the old jar! There was money enough for that, to scatter happiness here, to give joy there. She, the last Neal, the family disgrace, would disgrace it even more. Like the wildest revolutionist she was vandalizing the haunts of false pomp and glory.

She and the village were one; she was an O'Neil, one of that happy family there beneath the high hill. She flung open the great windows so long shut. She let a flood of dawn-light pour into the house, turning her face toward the town, lifting a radiant visage to the sun and the clean morning wind. There would be no ghosts in her house; there would be no empty rooms for them to haunt. The last Neal was going to store up a great stock of love for herself, and was starting already to garner up kindness and friendship.

Suddenly Roberta turned a happy face toward the west. There was no curtain of gray there now, all was serene. There was no more mystery connected with the land of beyond, for it was from there that her lover would come back to her. She knew that the sunlight and clean wind were starting a new day for her, a new day and a new story, which concerned two people, a happy story which had no ending.



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## BEATING

(Continued)

decided at the last moment to take them to Europe with me in case I saw the chance to sell them over there at a bigger profit than I could get for them in America. I signed the letter with a tracing of Mr. Warren's signature and inclosed the original key. Bonds and key were to be done in a package, properly insured, and sent to the Parker House, Boston, to be delivered either to Mr. Warren or his secretary, who would receipt for them.

"Of course, the letter-paper, typewriting and key all being genuine, Mr. Thirston never gave the matter a moment's suspicion. He did as directed, only when the bonds arrived, they were delivered to me—Mr. Warren was one day out on the Atlantic, to be gone a year. I receipted for them, spent a week quietly turning them into cash, and disappeared. Mr. Thirston thought of course that Mr. Warren had his bonds, and Mr. Warren thought of course that they were safe in his deposit-box at home, to which he had the key. He didn't come back for a year, and in that time I'd covered my trail perfectly—or supposed I had—and later went out of the country. That's the whole story, and it's the truth. And I've never heard from the whole business since."

"And you don't know whether Mr. Warren is looking for you or not?"

"No."

"And you're afraid to go home for fear he's come back, discovered his loss, and set detectives at work to find you."

"Yes."

"You poor boy!" she commented softly.

THE old-young man's secret was out at last. He did an inexplicable thing then. As she said the words in such mellow sympathy, a choke arose in his throat that would not go down. Tears flooded his eyes. He bent suddenly down across her soft lap, and the delicate gown was wet with his tears.

She had never seen a grown man weep before. But she did not try to stop him. She allowed him to remain there, and she comforted him by gently patting his shaking shoulders. When his hysteria had passed, he tried to turn away in shame and chagrin.

"You've told me this, dear friend," she said. "Will you let me tell you something in return? I can't go home, either!"

She said it quietly, but nevertheless it had all the effect as though she had shouted it at him.

"No," she said, "I can't go home, either. That's why I felt you and I had something in common and forced myself upon you in the hotel this afternoon. I too knew I had reached the point where I would go frantic for friendship that would permit a confidence. I didn't steal money, Mr. Weston. It isn't my fault that I can't go back. But—"

"You said you were an authoress!"

"Oh, don't you understand? You told



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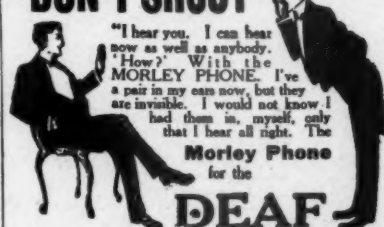
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## BACK

from page 33)

me coming over on the boat that *you* were an oil-man. It was all a blind; I had to have *some* reason to come out here, didn't I? As well as yourself! But I also am a fugitive from the law—after experiences like your own. Shall I tell you?"

Never in his hard life before had Sawyer known the feeling of comradeship that arose between himself and this sad-eyed girl now.

"Yes," he said. "Please do. I'll feel I haven't made such an awful idiot of myself in letting my nerves get out of control."

SHE told him her story. It was a narrative of a wealthy childhood in California, and a life of luxury which had palled upon her. She told of the death of her father, and her brother's ruinous conduct of the family money. She told of her brother's bankruptcy and the reduction to poverty which she had welcomed as an opportunity to do some worth-while work. But it had killed her mother, and her brother had ended his life by suicide. She told how her brother, foreseeing the bankruptcy, had turned over to her goods and money which he had no right to turn over, and which made her criminally responsible with him in secreting resources from creditors. Unwittingly she had tried to help him by taking the compromised property, and become an unknowing but no less guilty party to the conspiracy. Conviction had loomed certain. Alone to face the terrific odds, courage had deserted her. She had fled.

"I lost them all—father, mother, brother, all the life to which I had been born and bred, within three years," she ended brokenly. "And here you find *me* on a park bench in a strange land, wondering what my future is to be. I had a little money. I came out here hoping to take up some sort of work and forget. I've been unable to get the work, and to forget is impossible. Do you wonder that when I saw you gazing wistfully after the ship this afternoon, something in my heart responded to the look in your eyes?"

"No," he said when he could recover his voice.

She tried to laugh with a gaiety neither of them felt.

"You and I are a fine pair," she declared. "And our lives seem to have been placed pretty much in one another's hands."

It was after ten o'clock when they parted back in the lobby of the hotel. But that evening had seen the beginning of a romance that could not be avoided. And that romance also, could have but one ending.

IT was another rare evening in Tokio six weeks later when the affair came to a climax. They had been to a chrysanthemum exhibit and were returning slowly to the station to take the tram back to Yokohama. A low wall of mas-

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UNITED STATES RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

(Continued from page 125)

only bordered the walk. They paused to rest.

"Wynn," said the girl suddenly, "let's go home."

He muttered something about his tired feet.

"Oh, I mean home—home to America, Wynn. Let's go home and beat back. Let's make up for two bad mistakes."

"But you know the consequences, Harriet."

"Yes," she said hoarsely, "I know the consequences. I'm willing to face them. Wynn, Wynn, let's be honest!"

"It's too late," he said sadly. "I told

you months ago that I've gone through over fifteen thousand of that sixty-odd which I stole."

"It's never too late, Wynn," she contended. "It's the only way out. I was weak and miserable when I had no one to think of but myself. But somehow, Wynn, being with you, knowing your story, realizing what you might be doing while you're her in idleness, has brought the truth home to me. Wynn, let's go home and go to work. Work—work, that makes us live hard and regular lives, that regulates our habits and cheers us by the results of accomplishment—most of

all, that makes idleness and recreation something to be taken with enjoyment and measured at its true value, because we have a standard of toil to place it against."

"Work? What is there I can do now?" he cried miserably.

"There are a thousand things you can do—and I also, Wynn. We've dissipated, you and I. We've dissipated in idleness. And we've been punished by making too common the things which we should only taste in moderation. What you and I need is incentive in life—something to look forward to, something to accomplish, a goal to reach. And it's come to me at last—that goal."

"What?" he asked dully.

"Squaring ourselves with the world—beating back!" she declared. "For one thing, going to work and making up the fifteen thousand dollars you've paid to learn the lesson. You told me last night you loved me, Wynn. I told you that I had been miserable because I too had no goal to reach, no stakes to set, no work to do. Let's pool our resources, Wynn, as we have pooled our regrets. Let's make up that money to your employer and return it to him, every last cent. And when we have reached our goal, let's set another. Shall I say now what the other shall be?"

"I'll do it, Harry," he said brokenly but with a pathetic ring of eagerness in his voice, "if it wasn't for one thing: I couldn't ask you to help pay for my weakness and mistake."

"Wynn, dear, can't you understand that I want to pay—that it would be my salvation as well as your own? You didn't commit a crime, dear, you made a mistake. You've paid for that success by the very success of it; your experience has been a deadly exposition of what many people are beginning to include in their religious beliefs—that we are punished by our sins and not for them. I can't pay for my mistake by returning money, for the court secured my brother's poorly hidden assets. But I can face the consequences if I am discovered and called to account. I'm willing to risk it. But the work, helping you to retract on a bad mistake—what better task could a woman attempt than helping a man to come through clean?"

"But the end?" he cried. "What would be our reward?"

"The doing of it, Wynn. We've learned, you and I, that the only worth-while pleasure in life is anticipation; in attainment there's no enduring satisfaction. Let's make the project of redress our goal and take our pleasures together as recreation from that great task."

"Will you marry me, Harry?" he asked with a sudden hope in his voice. "Will you marry me if I'll do it? I couldn't ask you before, Harriet; I couldn't feel free to ask you to become the wife of a thief."

"Yes, Wynn," she said, "I'll marry you if you'll do it."

"But working with all my might, it may take me ten years to make up the money that's missing to total sixty-two thousand five hundred and eighty dollars."

"Then there will be ten years of happiness assured us, Wynn," she told him. "Because there will be ten years of anti-



icipation of the great end—the reaching of the goal.” She felt suddenly for her handkerchief, did not find it and wiped away a sudden moisture on her face with bare fingers instead.

The grotesque silhouette of a Japanese gentleman, kimono-clad, head and calves bare, rakish umbrella sticking out behind one arm, scuffed past; the scrape of his *geta* on the asphalt walk died in the distance. From afar came the wail of a blind girl crying out the shrill warning of her affliction that the human traffic might not run her down. A cicada sang its purring note in a near-by Japanese maple. The night seemed gently hushed, as though waiting for him to make reply.

But he did not make that reply at once. The romance had narrowed to this: a suddenly forked road.

Two ways were open—again! Which should he take?

The two paths seemed vividly in front of him—literal highways. He looked down one and saw wealth, ease, idleness—but his companion a leering, jeering specter of guilt, the price he must continue to pay for money until death; it was still an easy road if he could tolerate that remorseless phantom. Then he looked down the other road—the road of toil, hardship, danger. It held but one allurements—down this road there was no specter. Instead his companion was a comely, dark-eyed girl, holding out a shapely hand, willing to help.

Back in Boston that June day, along with the delirium of success had come that fleeting thought that he stood likewise at the parting of two ways, the chance was yet open for him to return the bonds if he cared to use the money before him to rebuy and restore them. He had chosen the road with the specter that other day—perhaps, because there had then been no woman.

Wynn Sawyer, absconder, suddenly made another decision.

It was a decision that brought the girl's soft arms about his neck in an embrace that locked their lives together from that moment onward. Her bracelet cut cruelly into his neck but he forgot the sharp pain in that strange sensation of her lips.

“I’ll do it—because the very success of my theft has cursed me,” he whispered brokenly. “I’ve discovered—that life is a disgusting, depressing thing without a goal and a dream.”

“I’ll do it,” she said, “because I know you’ve got a better self—because—I—love—you, dear.”

And that was eight years ago—to be exact again, November 21st, 1911.

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criminal; morally, no!" she told him once. "The moral criminal is bothered by no specter; the man beyond redemption never has regrets. People who do wrong and are sorry, never commit sin; they simply make mistakes." And patiently she helped him clean his record and pay his penance of work and hardship.

ON the twentieth of July in this year of grace 1919, a man and a woman came out of the West.

They entered the little Vermont town in the night-time by the shuttle train that comes up from White River Junction at one in the morning.

The man wore a Van Dyke beard, and his temples were iron gray. But there was more than beard or hair to thwart an exposure of his identity on the part of those who had known him as a pasty-faced, hollow-chested, rich man's secretary eleven years before. He walked with erect carriage and the swing of one who had spent much time in the open. His flesh was firm and hard, his face ruddy and weather-beaten. In his keen eye was the poise of one who is used to clean living, clear thinking and—far distances.

The woman with him was still comely, though her hands had become a bit misshapen with labor; there were traces of white in her dusky tresses and tiny wrinkles of increasing age in her neck and the corners of her eyes. But despite the evidence that she had aged faster than the man, there was likewise a beautiful strength in her face, and the cool, level gaze had not gone from the eyes that lighted with quiet affection when the man spoke to her.

"Harry," remarked the latter grimly as the train came through the lower railroad yards and the conductor called the station, "do you realize how long we've waited for the day that's dawning to-morrow?"

She did not answer. She turned away and looked out of the window.

It pleased the man to joke with her, but he stopped himself. He saw that his thoughtless raillery was irreverence.

They alighted on the depot platform. A handful of sleepy passengers followed them up to the business section.

"Eleven years," muttered the man under his beard. "And there's hardly a change in the place at all. That's the bank, Harry—over there on the corner."

They entered the scrubby little hotel together. He signed "Mr. and Mrs. William Weston, Salt Lake City, Utah," on the register. They got a three-dollar room and followed the solitary clerk-and-bellboy up the stairs.

"I'm going out for a little while, Harry," he told her. "I just want to look the town over and rehearse my plans for to-morrow."

He went out into the sleeping town and walked the familiar streets once more. And unconsciously he turned into Cross Avenue and made his way down toward the south of town, toward the factory that in the other days he had known so well. He stopped in astonishment when he came to the buildings. In his clerkship there had been but three of them, ranged helter-skelter with the sheds and outbuildings along the tracks. Now the silhouette of a mammoth in-

dustry reared before him, acre after acre of buildings, and along the top of the foremost burned an all-night illuminated sign:

# WARREN AUTOMATIC VALVE COMPANY, Inc.

It was like coming suddenly upon an acquaintance of other years suddenly distorted through accident into a monstrosity. The man took off his broad-brimmed hat and sat down on a pile of railroad ties in the deep shadow.

As he lingered there, it came to him what he might have been had he not made the Mistake,—the advantages that might have been his because of the confidential position to which he had been promoted, the position he might have held in this great industry if he had been true to his trust, the honest money and reward that might have accrued to him—all these rose up and mocked him. He thought also of the hard years—eight of them that seemed twenty—which had passed since he had realized his mistake and started honestly to beat back. He thought of his present financial poverty—what the hundred thousand dollars' worth of bonds the original sixty-two thousand plus compounded interest he had finally been able to purchase for the purposes of restoration—had cost him. He thought of the future—how he could not stop his labor even though one goal set by himself and a loyal, self-sacrificing wife was reached at last.

And something else came to him in these moments: recognition of the cost of the things in life that are worthy, and of the fact that short-cuts to great attainment are thievery which need no man-made punishment.

He went back to the hotel and the woman who had "beaten back" with him.

"Does Mr. Warren still head the valve-works?" he asked the sleepy clerk.

"Surest thing you know," the clerk replied. "What makes you ask?"

"I've got some business to do with him to-morrow," said the man, scarcely able to conceal his elation that his employer still lived and sooner or later would know of the restitution.

NEXT morning Wynn Sawyer started for the valve-works. And because the outcome meant so much to them both, the woman went with him.

They entered the enlarged offices of the factory.

"I want to see—Mr. Warren," Sawyer told the boy who accosted him.

"Yes sir. Name and business, please!"

Man and wife exchanged glances. He read the look in her eyes.

"Sawyer," he said in steady voice.

"Wynn L. Sawyer. I owe Mr. Warren a sum of money and have come to pay it personally. He'll understand."

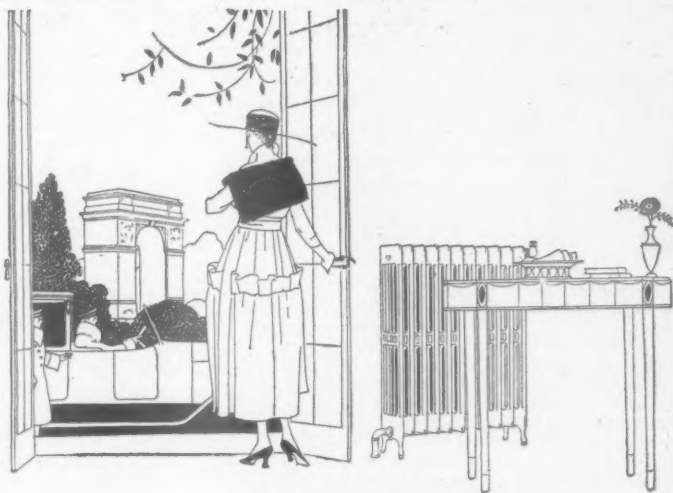
A harassing half-moment ticked away. The boy came back.

"This way, sir," he directed.

"I'll wait for you here," the woman whispered.

With head up and eyes fearless, the man gripped the blue envelope and followed the boy resolutely to Warren's office.

Warren was sitting back to the door



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when Sawyer entered. For a moment he continued bent over his work. Then he swung around and—

It wasn't Isaac Warren at all! The man who faced him was a person Wynn Sawyer had never seen before in his life.

"I—I—beg your pardon," he stammered. "It was Mr. Warren I wanted to see."

"I am Mr. Warren. To whom am I indebted for this visit?"

"But you're not Mr. Warren—at least not the Warren I used to know. You're not Mr. Isaac Warren!"

At mention of the name, the man in the chair started.

"Who are you?" he demanded sharply.

"Who are you that wants Isaac Warren, and owes him money?"

"I'm Wynn L. Sawyer. Eleven years ago I stole sixty-odd thousand dollars worth of bonds from the safe-deposit box of Mr. Isaac Warren and escaped with them. Through the good offices of my wife I was made to see the folly of my mistake. I've worked until I've made the sum good, with interest. I've got bonds in that amount here. I want to return them. Where is Mr. Isaac Warren?"

"My Gawd!" cried the man in the chair, half rising.

THE manufacturer crossed over and locked his office door. He came around the desk, eying the other incredulously.

"Now, then," he said in a not unkindly voice, "suppose you start at the beginning and let me have all the particulars." And strange though it was under the dramatic circumstances, the man occupying Warren's office opened a drawer and pulled out a box of cigars. "I'd feel better to have you smoke while telling me the story. I want to smoke myself. This sort of thing is rather out of the ordinary, you know."

Sawyer told him. He explained how he had secured the original bonds, how he had turned them into cash, every move he had made since. His voice broke just once. That was in narrating some of the sacrifices the woman had since been through to make good the deficiency. At last he brought it down into the present—and there followed a long moment of silence. And then Warren found his voice.

"Go out and bring your wife in here," he said. "I'd like to set eyes on a woman who'd persuade her husband to beat back that way."

He unlocked the door. Sawyer stepped outside and beckoned to the woman. The noon whistle had blown, and the office employees had gone. She was the only person in sight.

Wonderingly, not a little frightened, she obeyed the summons. She entered the private office and the door was closed again. The manufacturer merely nodded when the husband presented her. Then he slowly emptied the blue envelope of its contents when he had stared his fill at her.

The bonds were all there, every last penny's worth. They finally fell from the manufacturer's fat fingers.

"Sawyer," he said a bit thickly, "what

are you aiming to do, now that you've had this little—holiday?"

"That depends on Mr. Warren," the other answered. "If he is disposed to overlook my mistake, we're going back out West and start all over with a clean slate—for something really worth while."

The manufacturer glanced at him quickly and bored him with his kindly gray eye.

"Sawyer," he demanded, "don't you think you've played hooky from your job long enough?"

"What do you mean?"

"Don't you think you owe some more to this company?"

"You mean—" Sawyer's voice caught.

"Sawyer," snapped the other, "men who'll do a thing like this are too damned rare in these barren times on which the world has fallen. I wish to God I could acquire a dozen of them for this business right now."

"I've admitted I've been a thief, sir—"

"Thief—hell!—begging your pardon, madam; you're the most honest man I've met in a business career reaching over twenty-four years. Sawyer, I've a place for you where absolute and flawless honesty are the prime requisites to draw down the salary. I mean, damn it!—that I've got a job for you, and will have a job for you so long as I head this works. Now do you understand?"

For a moment Sawyer's senses swam in a sea of mist.

"Aren't you afraid I might do it again?" he asked.

"Aint I afraid you might do it again? No, I'm not afraid you might do it again! What you've been through is the best insurance against a repetition that God Himself could invent. Don't I know that a man who has beaten back of his own accord knows the folly of making a second mistake? Sawyer, you're a God-send! I've been wanting you for a year, and you've come right out of a clear sky. Will you take a job in this organization where the first and foremost requirement is absolute dependability?"

SAWYER suddenly found himself unable to speak. He turned blindly to his wife. Her face was wet with tears.

"I don't believe you—" he stammered. "Will you?"

"Yes!" choked Wynn Sawyer.

"Good! And now you and your wife are coming up to my house to stay with us until we've gotten this deal all buttoned up. I want my wife to meet both of you."

"But the bonds—what about the bonds? And Mr. Isaac Warren—what about him? Where is he?"

"Oh, yes—the bonds. Darned if I know what to do with the bonds. I suppose they ought to be turned over to Isaac Warren's widow. You see, I'm Franklin Warren, nephew of Isaac's. I've been heading the works since Isaac Warren's estate was settled eleven years ago. Isaac Warren was drowned when the *Empress of Europe* foundered off the coast of Ireland on that trip on which you saw him off. We've always supposed his sixty thousand dollars' worth of securities went to the bottom with him. Wait a moment. I'll phone for my car, and we'll call it a day."

## WHAT'S THE WORLD COMING TO?

(Continued from page 58)

ings, horses and dogs, wigs and what-not being materialized from the grave for the entertainment of those who can "see things." Every tribe of savages and every modern community, all the religions and all the gods have had revelants, not merely of souls but also of shoes, sandals, weapons and decent clothing. As Conan Doyle points out, nice ghosts do not go naked. But there are few if any instances of ghosts dematerializing current objects of furniture, wardrobe or finance. The fairies in Ireland often misplace articles, but they are not seriously charged with theft.

MRS. SUMMERLIN toyed with the ghostly explanation, but it did not begin to satisfy her, and it began to irritate April into a state of nerves. Mrs. Summerlin dropped the theory finally when April snapped:

"Don't be an idiot, Mother."

Mrs. Summerlin sat quiet for a time; then she gave a start. She remembered reading something about clairvoyants who could find lost objects and do all sorts of wonderful things. She had cut out an advertisement of such a miracle-monger. In some of the cities, though not in New York, these silly cheats were permitted to prey upon the foolish public, provided they took out a city license!

Mrs. Summerlin was rash enough to say: "Didn't I see something in the paper about a clairvoyant who could find lost objects and stolen things and give all sorts of wonderful information?"

"Yes, Mother darling!" April groaned. When April said "Mother darling," Mrs. Summerlin always knew that she was in for a bit of filial castigation for her own good. She got it now:

"You read in the paper that one clairvoyant lost some money of her own and appealed to the police to get it back; and you read that another was arrested for telling fortunes; the poor fool didn't even know that the woman she was telling the fortune to was really a woman detective gathering evidence against her."

"Oh!" said the humbled mother meekly, looking down at her fingers and feeling quite spanked.

April went on: "If you're thinking of voodoo and charms, let's call Pansy out of the kitchen and give her some tea-grounds or a pack of cards."

Mrs. Summerlin was vexed almost to insubordination, but Pansy appeared timely and announced luncheon.

Mrs. Summerlin called Zeb down to finish the studio while they were in the dining-room. And when the dismal meal was finished, she sent him into the dining-room to vacuum-clean that. He also cleaned up some cold luncheon in the kitchen, at Pansy's more or less insulting invitation. Then he appeared before Mrs. Summerlin and bade her a very good day. She was thinking of Bob's lost money too intently to remember Zeb's money, and so she bade him good day absently. Then he bade her good day once more with an unmistakable inflection that

called for wages. She paid him well and wished him well and urged him to take great care of his young master, who was very young.

Zeb reassured her: "Have no fears, Miz Sum'lin, I been young myse'f, and I been old. That's mo' than what folks ken say who has only been young."

AS he lugged his machine through the kitchen to the freight elevator, he promised Pansy that he would come and see her.

"Wait till somebody 'vites you," she snapped.

But Zeb just laughed and chortled: "Lordy, but it does ma old soul good to find you jes' the same little spit-cat I lef' behine when you and me was little."

But as the elevator took Zeb down, it took his contentment down with it. The grin that had spread like molasses over his face fermented to old sorghum. All triumphs turn out to be burdens finally, as the great world was beginning to discover. Its rulers, the League-makers in Paris, were still wrangling among themselves, and when they returned to their several countries, they would find new wrangles at home and a multitudinous dissatisfaction that almost converted the victory into ruin.

So old Zeb left the Summerlin apartment, with more loot than he had ever expected to look at, at one time. He had five thousand dollars in the container of his vacuum-cleaner, and it began to grow so heavy that he felt sure the five little slips of paper were transmuted into bushels of silver dollars. He was afraid that burglars would break in and steal. He had always felt before that his rags were armor against footpads—*cantabit vacuum coram latrone viator!* But now innocent passengers who glanced at his baggage seemed to him to look at it with suspicion and covetousness. Finally Zeb grew conspicuous, for there is no more certain way to attract attention than to be desperately eager to avoid it.

He hastened like a thief: he rewarded the most indifferent look with such a glare that people began to turn and wonder. If there had been a policeman handy, they would probably have sent him on an errand after Zeb. But they were too busy to take up the pursuit. When Zeb at last reached the small room which served as his office and his residence, he locked himself in, pulled down the shade, turned on a light, took off the lid of the container and dumped out the contents. There among the rubbish he was almost surprised to find the five magic plasters, twisted by the suction and the swift passage through the hose into little wads and lamp-lighters.

Zeb caressed them and talked to them and called them "honeys" and "chillun." But he was afraid of them. It would be so easy for them to be blown away or set on fire. It would be so hard to protect them from the unimaginable horror of loss. Where could he put them? He would as soon have carried five copper-

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Floyd E. Brickel tells why he was elected Treasurer and Gen'l Manager

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Floyd E. Brickel

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head snakes on his person as kept them about him. To leave them in his office was his sole recourse; yet he debated it until he was almost out of his wits.

There was another danger, the most terrible thief of all—fire. Fire would stick its slim red fingers into any crevice and spend the money instant. He reckoned that there would be a partial safety in the metal container, and put the bills and the rubbish back where they had been. Then he draped an old coat over the thing with a painful effort to secure a look of carelessness. Finally he locked his door and hurried away to buy his new clothes.

ZEB had been a slave, the son and grandson of slaves. The meek genealogy of his family traced back to some ancestor who came over in no *Mayflower* but in the steerage of those dreadful hulks that dragged from Africa and sold to America a problem that it will never solve. It was not Zeb's fault that his forebears had been stolen from the continent that had sunburned them, and had been transported to a continent where their tint would be their guilt.

Nor was it the fault of the white people of this generation that such hideous merchandise had been dealt in by ancestors to whom slavery had a patriarchal and a scriptural authority. The earlier generations had debated the riddle for more than half a century in Congress, and then for four years on bloody battlefields. The slaves had been proclaimed free and their new status written among the statutes, but it is easy to amend legal laws and hard to achieve amendments of the human constitution. Negroes were still born black in spite of Lincoln and Grant.

Thousands of them had recently been put into the uniform and sent under the flag to France. There some of them had met glory and a glorious death. Into all of them had been instilled the doctrine that they were citizens and defenders of liberty. The sympathizers with Germany had counted upon black revolutions, but the negroes had run no amoks in 1918, as they had run none in 1862. And yet the old docility was no longer universal among them. The pride that upheld them overseas persisted when they came home, and the race-problem was added to the labor-crisis and both to the chaos of crises that kept the world tremulous.

In Washington, and then in Chicago and other cities North and South race-riots flamed up for a few days, and white snipers shot down negroes, and motor-cars filled with armed negroes made forays along crowded streets.

The terrors were brief, but they were ominous. They proved that the whites would rather kill and torture negroes than grant them equality and that some of the negroes would rather accept death than accept inequality. Exactly the same things had happened in greater degree during the centuries of debate among various sects of the Christian and other religions, but religious deeds as well as legal deeds go in and out of fashion, and what was hallowed in one era is abhorred in another.

This choice was so well understood by the vast bulk of the dark populace that



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they ordered their lives and their ambitions and pleasures on a subordinate plane. Zeb was one of these. He had no more desire to be one of the whites than a tiger-lily has to be a rose. He wanted to be a good man, a good black man, and take the goods the good Lord provided for good negroes. His heart was full of noble intentions, of wise saws and of virtuous precepts. He toiled hard and was as honest as his lights allowed. He was as good a man as he could be, and he trusted that his reward would be delivered to him in another world. He did not even wonder whether there would be a separate negro heaven or not.

He had stolen five thousand dollars, of course, but it was for the sake of the family to which he was as abjectly devoted as an English peer to a reigning dynasty or an American to his political party. Zeb was an hereditary retainer of the house of Taxter and as proud of his servility as if the name were York or Plantagenet. He wanted to give the money back and take what punishment his devotion might win. But he wanted to make sure that it should not fall into the hands of the unholy house of Yarmy.

When he went shopping, his meekness led him to a shop where the custom of negroes was welcome, for in the great republic where all men are created free and equal it is not permitted to negroes even to make purchases at the pale-face emporiums. The invisible police that keep negroes from buying orchestra seats in theaters, from stopping at fashionable hotels, from eating in fashionable restaurants, sentinel also the portals of the big department-stores. The law explicitly compels innkeepers and all other purveyors to the public to make no discrimination against any hue of skin, but custom always thwarts or nullifies the laws that it dislikes.

Even in an Afro-American shop Zeb found that fifty dollars would not buy much grandeur. Before he realized it, all the money Bob had given him, the amount that Mrs. Summerlin had paid him, and a terrifying slice of his own savings had melted away in the purchase of such things as he needed to uphold the respectability of a Taxterian.

Loaded down with bundles, he hobbled back to his own quarters. He was amazed not to find the fire-engines in front of them. He could hardly believe his eyes when they rested on the five terrible bills.

He changed his clothes, admired himself in his finery, and gave away his cast-off raiment to a worthy woman whose worthless husband was of the same general build as Zeb. Then he set forth to the apartment-house where Bob lived. He took with him his vacuum-cleaner. He did not intend to let it get far away from him, for he wanted it at hand when the time came for returning Bob's unwitting deposit in the vacuum bank.

Bob had instructed the clerk at his hotel to admit Zeb to his rooms, and there the old man began a new chapter in the gospel according to Zebulon.

## CHAPTER XXV

WHEN Joe Yarmy and Kate left the Summerlin apartment, they were exceedingly glum. They did not seek at



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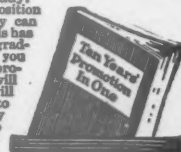
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stead. They wandered down Broadway  
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exacerbation. They were hailed unex-  
pectedly by a sturdy citizen of large bulk  
whose cordiality they did not echo.

"Hello, Joe!" he murmured smilingly,  
and added with more enthusiasm: "And  
as I live and breathe, it's my old friend  
Kate! Well, well!"

Kate and Joe answered coldly, "Hello,  
McCann."

McCann would not be snubbed. "I  
haven't seen you two in a coon's age.  
I never dreamed you were in town.  
Does the Skipper know you're here? I'll  
bet he doesn't. Come on down and have  
a little chat with the old man—what do  
you say?"

"We aint got time," said Joe. "We're  
goin' out on an early train."

"Is that so?" said McCann. "Well,  
well! I don't blame you. With so many  
people in town and the hot weather com-  
ing on, and all, I don't suppose you'd  
find little old New York healthy. When  
were you thinking of leaving?"

"To-night," said Joe.

"Well, well! Always glad to see you  
both. I'll keep an eye out for you and  
tip the Skipper off. If you happen to be  
in town to-morrow, he'll certainly want  
to see you, and he wont take 'No' for  
an answer. Well, so long!"

He waved to them amiably and smiled  
after them till they disappeared.

They turned off Broadway to a side-  
street and then strolled up Fifth Avenue.  
Two or three other men of a curious kin-  
ship to McCann spoke to them to the  
same tenor, but they reiterated their de-  
termination to leave town that night.

By one of those coincidences that be-  
come important by suggesting and shap-  
ing future action, they chanced to be  
sauntering slowly past the Fifth Avenue  
Bank just as Bob Taxter came out and  
got into a taxicab. By the way he tapped  
his pocket, they felt sure that he had  
drawn out money, and from a glimpse  
they snatched at the elderly woman in  
the taxicab, they judged that he had met  
the mother he had told Kate about in  
one of their confidential chats. They  
were not near enough to hear the direc-  
tions Bob gave the driver, but the taxi  
went north.

Joe and Kate moved the same way,  
after exchanging a glance like a very  
brief consultation. They advanced now  
at a more cheerful and resolute cadence.

**BOB** had not seen Joe and Kate as he  
left the bank. But he had thought  
of them—thought of them in a swirl of  
contradictory impressions. Joe had dis-  
appointed and angered him by his un-  
couth uproar over the loss of the money.  
He had never thought of Joe as a gentle-  
man by instinct or training. Now he saw  
that he was a noisy and an ugly rotter.

But he could find nothing to complain  
of in Kate's behavior. He had thought  
of her as a lady by instinct though not  
by breeding. She had been far more  
courteous to April than April to her. She  
had replied to April's insulting insinua-  
tions with the soft answers that, passing  
from one woman to another, turn wrath  
into fury.

Bob was haunted by the sad look in Kate's eyes as she bade him a long farewell after his statement that the deal was off. He felt now that he had been needlessly curt. He had said nothing personal to Kate, but had let her go out of his life as bluntly as if she had been the merest acquaintance. Yet he had held her in his arms; he had danced with her ardently and audaciously; he had tried to kiss her and had been compelled to forgo her lips and treat her with respect. He had thrilled with secret thoughts of long communions with her, of a partnership in the oil-fields. He felt about his hand now the warm pressure of her fingers. They had let go as a woman's might when she drowned. Kate was sinking and drowning now in the ocean of oblivion, the ocean made up of the throngs we might have known better, might have known wildly well, or fatally.

Bob was harrowed, too, by the puncture of the huge bubble of his dreams. A few hours ago, and he was a man with a future, a man of potential wealth, with a definite plan of campaign. Now he was a young fellow with half his fortune and all of his hopes gone; he was a crass youth meeting his mother at a train.

Bob loved his mother, and he was proud of her. She was very beautiful and full of haughty grace that grew meek and devoted at the sight of him. It was good to have her in his arms, cooing her delight at having him to lean on again, praising him with idolatrous extravagances whose excess delighted him while convincing him of his own unworthiness.

SHE had not had luncheon, and he went with her through long crypts to the vasty majesty of the Pennsylvania Hotel, where they ate and chattered. She wanted to hear all about his exploits in France. Everybody else he had met was so fed up on military reminiscences that he never dared describe an adventure at length, and hardly to allude to the fact that he had been a soldier at all. He reveled in his mother's appetite for anecdote. She seemed to be convinced that he had won the war single-handed. She gasped with terror at what he had dared.

He had been a good soldier and he could afford to brag to his mother with a childlike ingenuousness, because the more he aggrandized himself, the more tribute he paid her for mothering him into the world. But even while he recounted his tremendous charges up the sky and his inconceivably wild descents from the empyrean, the back of his head was full of the bitter truth that he was a civilian again, and that both his occupation and his ambition were gone.

She spoke of his legacy, and he had to confess to the appalling truth that half of it had melted into thin air without even making a puff of smoke.

"But I'm going to make twice as much with the half that is left," he said, "and I've got to go to it right away."

"Oh, no!" his mother moaned. "You're going to take a good long rest and have a long, long visit with me."

There has never been a keener spur to youthful ambition, probably, than the appeals of a mother who knows enough, or happens, unwittingly, to beg her son not to work too hard. All advice sets up a sense of opposition, and parents who for-



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ever hold the lash over their children create more balkiness than energy. Mrs. Taxter was altogether sincere in imploring her son to leisure, but the result was to inflame his impatience to succeed. So now that impetuous will, that burning frenzy for action that had made him a superb warrior who forgot his mother and bantered death, made him ruthless toward her and set him frantic to be about his raid upon fortune.

WHEN they had finished luncheon, he called a taxicab and gave the driver the address of his Aunt Sally, at whose house his mother was to stop. Bob had not yet found time even to call there. As the cab ground its halting way up Fifth Avenue almost solid with motor-cars, the brief dashes and the long stops threw Bob into one of those nerve-storms of his when his soul was like a sultry sky aching with suppressed lightning. In a flash of impulse he tapped on the glass and told the driver to stop at his bank.

He explained to his mother that he was short of funds, and wanted to draw out a little cash. He was a bit swaggery about it, and he returned the salute of the tall carriage-man with a snap. He started to write a check for fifty dollars, but his muscles expressed his obsession, and when his pen wrote "Fi," before he knew, it had run into "Five thousand" instead of "Fifty."

He was about to tear up the check, but he paused to consider and was lost. Bob was one of those who did wise things on instinct and unwise on reason. He did not tear up the check. He took it to the paying-teller, who gave him unfamiliar face a searching glance and went to verify the signature and the amount on deposit.

While Bob waited for the telautograph to report on his account, he wondered if he would not leave for Texas that very night—not if he could or should, but if he would. Bob was always wondering what he would do. He never knew in advance. He was afraid of himself, and not without excuse. His calmer self, like a substantial parent, had often to pay the bills of the unruly son who was his other self.

It occurred to Bob that while he would certainly not be going to Texas to meet Kate Yarmy, of course he might run into her there. It would indeed be his duty to look over the property of the Yarmys, and he might still go in with them.

Hot flashes ran through his scalp as if his brain were ignited with its own reckless adventurings. He saw Kate Yarmy in a highly enhanced vision. He wanted to be true to April in his least thought, but he could not keep his fancies always on the leash. It is a great victory for a soul to be loyal in its conduct, but who ever tamed the imagination? It is as lawless and uncontrollable as a populace of bees. To have the workers come home to the hive of nights is as much as can be expected. And they often sting as they return, or stagger back drunken with alien nectar found beyond the fenced clover-patch of domestic ownership.

At length the teller returned and asked Bob how he would have his money. Bob answered with majestic indifference, as if he were merely scratching his account instead of canceling it:

"Five ones, please."

As soon as he had spoken, he felt an alarm. He had drawn out five other "ones," and they had disappeared. He remembered how *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn* had tried to find a lost coin, and wondered if he were going to send these bills after their "brothers" to bring them back or be lost with them. He dared not change his order, however, and with a strangled "Thank you," he slid the balance of his wealth across the glass plate and tucked it in an inside pocket.

He was so alarmed at this larceny from himself that he dared not confess to his mother the conspiracy he was meditating against her dreams of a long visit with him. He spoke of being awfully busy with his investment-investigations; he said that he was "looking into oil," and he implied that he might have to run out of town for a while to make a personal study of the field.

His mother implored him not to trouble his poor brain till it was rested after his frightful experiences abroad; she pleaded with him not to try to get rich, and described the dismal life his Uncle Randolph Chatterton had led piling up the fortune that he had never enjoyed. With what we like to call a "Southern" devotion to life as a comfort and not as a career, she said:

"It's your business as an heir to spend your inheritance, not to be a miser."

And this easy counsel, as usual, stimulated Bob to new determination. The duty of obedience to one's mother is of all duties the one most honored in the breach instead of the observance.

Bob accepted his Aunt Sally's reproaches for his neglect of her with further allusions to his tremendous plans, and unable to endure the petty chatter of the two women, made a contemptible excuse for escape:

"I'll leave you two to unload your gossip, and I'll run downtown and attend to a little business."

His mother gave a cry of protest, but she could not hold him. Seeking any excuse to be with him and to see where and how he lived, she said she would call up the Summerlins and ask them to meet her at his hotel as a halfway house. He acceded to this and hurried to his hotel.

The sky was black overhead with livid blotches. Gusts of wind scurried along the streets like heralds warning all good people to take shelter, for a great rain was coming. Along the pavements old newspapers were skating, and the carefully garnered heaps of waste collected by the street-cleaners were being scattered by the mischief in the air.

Bob looked up at the sky where he had outflown the birds of storm and felt meek and shamed as he hurried along the ground, craven before a threat of mere raindrops. He could not find a taxicab, and by and by from the cloud-emplacements the machine-guns of heaven began a barrage of water-bullets. Bob turned up his collar and ran.

## CHAPTER XXVI

BY this time the ex-professor of vacuum cleaning had installed himself in Bob's two rooms as a valet, butler,

maid, counselor, dictator and slave. There was enough for him to do as a bodyservant, for Bob's effects were in utter disarray, and Zeb took the same delight in straightening them that a mother does in an infant's wardrobe. Black hands love white clothes, and Zeb was almost maternally in his affectionate disposition of Bob's personal linen.

He was interrupted by the telephone, and wandered about looking for it. When he found it, he was shocked to hear a woman's voice that was not Miss April's. Zeb had various kinds of respectfulness to offer, and he used one of the lowest grades in answering this perilous invisible intruder that answered Zeb's vague "Hello" with so sweet a query:

"Is this Mista Taxta?"

"No'm. I'm his boy."

"His boy! I didn't know he had one."

"I aint his son-boy—jes' his plain boy-boy."

"Oh, I see. Well, is he in?"

"No'm—no'm—I don't know jes' how soon he's bein' back. Shall I give him yo' name? No'm? . . . No'm. . . . Yaw'm!"

He hung up the receiver and glared into the transmitter as if he were trying to see along the wire. The voice had a certain familiarity. He shouted at the telephone:

"If you'm Miss Yahmy, you go 'long abote yo' business and keep offa ouah wiah."

He turned away in a fury. He caught sight of himself in a cheval-glass, and his anger was changed to frank rapture in his own sartorial nobility. He posed and bowed and practiced attitudes upon his understudy in the mirror, talking to it moodily according as it behaved.

"That you, Zeb? Lawdy, but you'm lookin' grand." He went to an imaginary door, took an imaginary card on an imaginary tray, and bowed an imaginary visitor to a seat. "Howdy, Miss April. You'm lookin' mighty fine these days. When's that old weddin' day comin' roun'?"

Then he fussed about among the wedding guests with all the tyranny and pride of old negro servants at a Southern ceremony. Pansy, of course, was all dressed up and standing well to the fore, and weeping hopelessly as was proper to the mammy of the bride. But of course Zeb was outraged at her fears for Miss April as the wife of Masta Bob and the special ward of Uncle Zeb. His vision of the howling Pansy as mammy-of-honor was so vivid that when the telephone summoned him from his prophetic fancies, he was terrified to hear Pansy's own voice:

"Hello! Is Mista Taxta thah?"

"No," Zeb yelled. "Who's you?"

"This Pansy."

"Pansy? Pansy who?"

"Go 'long, you old fool."

"Oh, now I knows that gentle voice!"

Say, Pansy, can you see ma new clo's where you're standin' at? Well, you're missin' a heap. I'm all in livery—and bacon."

"Shut up, whilst I tell you ma mesidge. Miz Taxta invited ma Miss Ma'y and Miss April to meet her there, and Miss Ma'y say to say we-all will be about half a hough late."

"I reckon us Taxtas would expec' that

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of you Summalins. But I'll tell 'em. Ef you're comin' along, you'll get a chance to see me in ma bridal gahments." His voice turned to the thickest and stickiest of cane-sirup as he murmured: "Say, Pansy Blossom, does you love me?"

"Don't pester me, nigga, don't pester me!"

"That's the talk! I knowed you did." He was still chuckling as he asked: "Has you-all located them thousand-dolla' bills yet?"

"No. I even sifted the ashes in the grate, and they aint nowhahs."

"I reckon a angel must 'a' called 'em home. Well, good-by, Pansy Blossom. I'm so busy I cain't linga no longa."

"You busy!" Pansy cackled, and cut the parley short.

AS Zeb hung up the receiver, he heard a key turning in the lock; the door opened, and his master entered in such a flurry that when the doorknob caught in his pocket, he ripped the cloth before he could check himself.

He swore beautifully. Zeb was amazed and impressed by his vocabulary. He was very sympathetic as he helped remove the torn and rain-drenched coat.

"Aint dat scan'lous? Whaffor they want to put knobs on a do' for? I'll mend it up all nice."

Bob scowled. "The patch would show."

"Not on me," Zeb grinned. Bob stared at him, recognizing the familiar passion of Zeb's kind for old suits. "Good Lord, are you taking my clothes already?"

Zeb smiled. "That vest wont be much good to you, seein' the coat's done rip."

Bob tossed his hands in despair before such greed, whipped off his waistcoat and handed it over. "Anything else you want?"

Bob darted into his bedroom and began to empty his trousers pockets there.

Zeb followed to inquire: "What suit you allowin' to put on in place of them pants of mine you're wearin'?"

"The blue serge."

"I'll git it out." As he crossed to the clothes-closet, Bob gave a start and a cry, ran to him and felt in the inside pocket of the waistcoat on Zeb's arm. He took thence five thousand dollars and verified them before Zeb's popping eyes. Zeb stared at the vacuum-cleaner in the corner and wondered if it were bewitched. He stammered:

"You's found the los' money?"

"No, this is another five thousand I just drew out of the bank."

Zeb fairly groaned with relief. Bob asked: "Has anybody telephoned about the other five?"

Zeb gave him Pansy's message and her information that the money was not yet found. He forgot to mention the anonymous caller on the telephone.

Bob mused aloud: "Where in God's name could that money have gone? Five thousand dollars! And they just went—whiff! Nobody was near them; yet away they flew. It's uncanny. I haven't an idea who took it, have you?"

Zeb folded the trousers with shivering hands as he confessed: "Well, I—I has an idea."

"You have? You don't suspect the Yarmys, do you?"

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"No, that's about the onliest thing on earth I wouldn't accuse 'em of."

"Who then?"

"I aint namin' no names," Zeb protested, aghast at the complexity of his position.

Bob laughed at him: "Of course she was determined to prevent my going to Texas, but—oh, I couldn't suspect her."

"Ef I was you, Masta Bob, I wouldn't suspect nobody. I'd jest wait. It'll pop up some day you least suspect it."

"But I need it now, damn it. It puts a crimp in all my plans. Now I have to go to Texas with only half the chance I had."

"You has to go to Texas?" Zeb howled in a frenzy of alarm.

"Yes, and I may go any minute."

Zeb was desperate enough to offer a prayer: "If you ask my advice, you'll marry Miss April and take us all back home."

"Marry Miss April!" Bob laughed softly and bitterly as he took from his pocket the engagement-ring April had returned to him. He tossed it on the bureau with the wad of bills.

"Aint you goin' to marry Miss April?" Zeb whispered in horror.

"No, but I'm goin' to fire you if you're not careful. Did I hire you as a lawyer or a valet?"

"Valet—valet!" Zeb gasped. "You betta stand out of them damp pants befo' you ketches cold in the laigs."

HE found the blue serge trousers, and Bob changed to them while Zeb stood regarding the five thousand dollars on the bureau. He was tempted to seize this wealth also and cache it till Bob changed his mind about Texas. When the telephone rang, and Bob pocketed the money and went into his drawing-room to answer it, Zeb was almost distraught with temptation to follow and take it from him. The only thing that checked his rashness was the memory of the torture the first five thousand had given, and still gave, him.

From the telephone Bob received a message that amazed him. The hotel central sang out:

"Say, Lieutenant, your sister is on the way up."

"My what?"

"She said she was your sister," the central answered with a tone of sophisticated skepticism in her voice.

"You must mean my mother," Bob said.

"She didn't look like anybody's mother," the central taunted, and went about her other chores.

A rush of wind from the increasing storm outside banged the door between his bedroom and his living-room. It was followed by a soft knock on the door. He called out "Come!" from where he stood.

The door opened slowly and as it were slyly, and Kate Yarmy slipped into the room, closed the door behind her and stood smiling at him unquestioningly and with a look of light challenge. She was as beautiful against the dull brown of the door as if a sudden angel stood there in golden apparition. Her face had the wind-blown, rain-blessed glow of a ripe peach, and her eyes had the daring gaiety of a young vixen whose motives are



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**References:** This Magazine; First National Bank of Chicago

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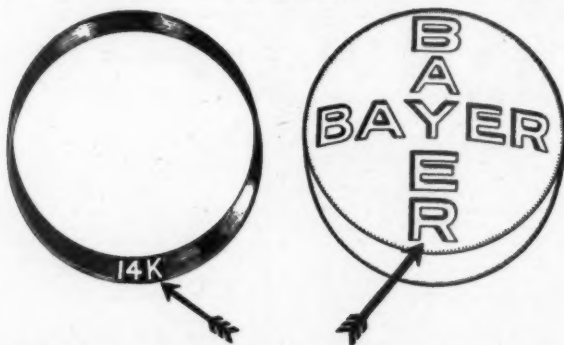
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ambiguous between innocence and in-  
trigue.

Bob stared at her in speechless ad-  
miration, fear and curiosity. He could  
not speak till she unlocked her lips with  
the word we use so incessantly and with  
such variety of content: "Well?"

Then all he could think of was a stu-  
pid: "Why, it's Miss Yarmy!"

She made a feint at turning away. "Of  
co'se, if you were expectin' somebody  
else—"

"No, no. I'm not expecting anybody  
—except my mother and some other peo-  
ple—later."

"Your mother? Oh, then ladies do  
visit you here?"

"Not alone—that is—not ladies like  
you—young and beauti—"

"Go on," she teased.

"Beautiful!" he finished uncomfortably.

"I was afraid you were goin' to rob  
me of that," she laughed, still nailed to  
the door whence he did not dare invite  
her to advance, especially as he suddenly  
realized that he was standing before her  
without coat or waistcoat.

To a man of his habit, an inappropriate  
costume is equivalent to a nakedness,  
and he feels exactly the same emotions  
and fugacity. His distress was apparent,  
but Kate misjudged its origin. She  
pouted most fetchingly:

"I reckon I did ve'y wrong to come."

"Not wrong," Bob protested, "but—  
well—"

"I thought the elevata-boy looked at  
me in a funny way. But we Texas girls  
are used to goin' anyweah, you know.  
I'm nevva quite suah of maself up  
Nawth, and I'm always gettin' into  
trouble. My brotha shot a man once for  
misintuppretin'."

"Shot a man!" Bob gasped.

"He was a horrid old beast, anyway.  
Besides, my brotha hasn't the faintest  
idea I am heah. He'd kill me if he had. I  
reckon—and take a shot at you, maybe.  
But I—well, I just couldn't he'p comin'.  
I'm leavin' taown to-night."

THIS whole budget of information was  
staggering in several ways to Bob.  
But he could not reveal his uneasiness.  
It was like him, when he should have  
said, "Go away at once!" to say, "Wont  
you sit down?"

Kate moved forward to a chair with  
a leopardlike liteness of peculiar grace  
and omen. The way she disposed her  
limbs in the chair was oddly interesting.  
She was very round, and it was pleasantly  
manifest that she had the use of all her  
joints.

Bob said: "If you'll pardon me one  
minute, I'll put on my coat."

But he had to wait to hear her when  
she ignored this remark and said: "I was  
wonderin' if you-all had found the lost  
money yet."

"Not a trace of it."

"That's just tew bad. And it was all  
you had, you poor boy?"

Bob defended himself from the "poor"  
by remarking: "Well, I have five thou-  
sand left."

"Oh, I am glad," said Kate. "It  
would break my heart to have you lose  
everything on our account."

"It wasn't your fault at all, but—if  
you'll let me get my coat."

"Please don't botha! I'm used to men in shirt-sleeves. Joe nevva wears a coat in Texas. I'm goin' to take off my hat, if you don't mind. It got almost torn off ma head in that awful rain-stawm. Most of my hairpins went with it. My hair is a sight."

Bob stood watching the swift deft motions of her graceful arms, realizing cloudily what an art women make of putting on or taking off a hat.

Kate lifted away the heap of colored straws and feathers and ribbons and skewered it to the back of the chair with a long hatpin.

Then she began tossing her radiant hair about with her fingers, complaining: "My hair is a sight."

"A beautiful sight!" Bob sighed.

"Oh, you Virginians!" she gurgled, twisting in the chair to peer at him around the edge of it and as it were, pouring her gracious upper body across the ledge of the arm of it. "You Virginians aren't afraid to tell a woman the pretty things she's achin' to hear."

"Aren't we?" said Bob. "I can tell you a lot more if you'll let me get into a coat."

Kate laughed and nodded her consent. He went to the door and called to Zeb to bring his coat.

Kate leaped to her feet and fluttered: "Oh, is some one else here?"

"Only my black man."

"I knew I shouldn't have come!"

Zeb appeared at the door with the blue serge coat and waistcoat ready for Bob's arms. He peered round Bob's shoulder as they struggled into place. The look he gave Kate was frankly hostile. She answered it in kind.

BOB turned his back on Kate while he buttoned his waistcoat. This was another of the subtleties of modesty. When he turned round, he left the door open—as a protection to Kate. She did not seem to take much comfort from this considerateness.

She lowered her voice as Bob took a chair in front of her. Also she sat more erect and drew down her skirts—with that quaint way many women have of lifting them a little higher before they shake them down—the same mystic habit that leads them to wear gowns cut very low and then to keep their hands fluttering about for concealment.

"You must think I'm puffectly crazy," she said.


"You're perfectly charming," said Bob.

"You're mighty nice to say so, anyway," she beamed. "But you see, when we left the home of Miss Summalin,—isn't she a dolling girl, a puffect dolling! —Joe found at ouah hotel a telegram saying we must go back to Texas at once—to-night. Somebody's disputin' ouah title to ouah own home. We've got to go back and fight for it."

Bob was so instant and sincere with his regrets that she was encouraged to go on:

"I just couldn't leave without tellin' you good-by. I wish you could have gone into pawnshop, because—because—oh, I like you mighty much. I oughtn't to say it, but I can't he'p tellin' you."

She put out her hand in appeal. He took it and pressed it. It hurt him like the drawing of an arrow out of a wound



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when she took it from his clasp, and his blood seemed to go out after it.

"I just dashed ova here and I got blown to pieces. My hair—don't look at me."

"I can't keep my eyes off you," said Bob, rushing into the opportunity for praise that she opened, as the air pursues and closes about a fleeing object. Courtesy also abhors vacuums, and canny women are always establishing them for polite men to fill with compliments. In Bob's part of the country, not to praise a woman when the occasion offers is to insult her. His heart was suddenly blooming with bouquets of flattery to offer this strange creature who welcomed them so well.

With an abrupt impatience and a very pretty show of temper, she tore down the structure of her hair and let it stream about her shoulders. In Spain women are forbidden to go to church with their hair uncovered. In Turkey the revelation of a woman's tresses is a terrible thing. They know a thing or two, those nations. Bob's heart was losing itself in that poetic madness of Kate's locks. But her words were prosaic enough.

"Do you happen to have a few hairpins?"

He laughed with shivering jaws: "I don't use them."

"What shall I do? I've got to get out of here and go back to Joe and—maybe your man would go and get me some hairpins."

Bob was either too innocent to realize that Zeb's departure would leave them entirely unchaperoned, or desperate enough to wish him gone. In any case, he called Zeb to him.

"Yassa!" Zeb answered at the door with a startling promptitude that proved he had not gone far away.

Bob said: "About a block down the street is a little notion-store."

"Does you want some little notions?" Zeb queried impudently.

Bob was cold. "Go there and get a package of hairpins."

"Haiahpins?" Zeb said. "I reckon one of them chambamaids has 'em. I'll ring."

Kate answered smartly: "I don't care to borrow hairpins from a chambermaid!"

"Certainly not!" said Bob—and to Zeb: "Do as you're told. Here's the money."

Bob's hand dived into his pocket and pulled up, with a heap of change, the bills. Kate's eyes widened, but she said nothing. But Zeb did. He took his life in his hands and ventured a fearful impertinence.

"Beta hadn't you leave that money in the safe downstairs?"

Bob scowled. "Get along!"

Zeb went into the hall by the bedroom door. He was defeated and afraid.

AS soon as he had gone, Kate grew more comfortable, and rose to ask: "While we're waiting for the hairpins, could you lend me a comb and a brush?"

"Certainly!" said Bob, hastening into his bedroom. As he turned from the bureau, he saw her standing at the door with a childlike curiosity.

"May I have a peek? So this is where you live. Would you mind if I used your mirror there?"

Bob was in a state of foolish terror. He could not possibly remind her that there was a mirror over the mantel in the living-room. He stepped aside as she marched to the bureau and began to comb and brush and braid and coil her plentiful tresses into the mystery of a coiffure.

Two natures struggled bitterly in Bob's heart: One of them pleaded with him: "Get you gone to a distance from this temptation. Turn your eyes from her beauty and your feet from her neighborhood. Save her from her own guilelessness or from her own guile. Beware of entangling alliances!" The other spirit raged at him: "Don't be a white-blooded ninny! Take her in your arms. That's what she's here for. She'll despise you if you don't, and you'll despise yourself if you let her go. What are you—a man or a clam?"

He was actually quivering with the wrestling match, but neither warrior for his soul could quite prevail.

Kate parted the curtains of her hair to peer out at him with twinkling eyes and to murmur with a frightful childishness: "Aren't we getting well acquainted?"

"Aren't we?" Bob chattered like a wooden man.

She gathered her hair about her head and made a rope of its length and laid it across one shoulder, while she noted that she had a few flowers at her bosom. She broke one rose from the cluster and said: "I wish you could come to Texas sometime. We have roses like this in the dead of winter, and magnolias like bowls of alabaster. Will you wear this for me—a little remembrance—of a foolish girl?"

She drew close to him, while he stood like a statue—a statue of new bronze only whose surface was established and within all one core of fire. She put her hands to the lapel of his coat and tucked the stem of a rose in the buttonhole. It seemed to thrust down into his heart.

The savor of her hair was drugging the gentler warrior that pleaded with him very faintly now to have mercy on himself and on this woman equally in peril, whether through ignorance or wile.

She looked up at him with a smile like the swift blooming of a human rose. Still he could not put out his hand to touch her or set his lips against hers.

**A**FTER an eternity of a moment, she moaned: "I think I am going to faint."

She clutched at the throat of her gown and tore it open a little, and toppled against him. Now he had to take her in his arms and help her to a chair. And then he could no more take his arms from her than he could put them around her before. Yet her helplessness protected her from him—and him from her beauty.

While he hovered irresolute, he heard some one knocking at the door in the other room.

Kate heard it too. She opened her eyes and whispered:

"Oh, my God, if it should be my brother!"

Bob thought of a more horrible confrontation and whispered: "Or my mother!"

Kate clutched at his hands and shud-



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dered. "Oh, why did I ever come? If it's Joe, he'll kill us both!"

Her terror furnished Bob a little courage: "Better be as quiet as you can—till I get rid of—whichever it is."

Bob went staggering into the living-room, closing the door back of him very softly. He was laboring over a smile for his mother, and feeling dog-sick at the necessity for hypocrisy before her.

All the mad sweetness of the adventure with the pretty girl turned to a loathsome dust and ashes. Now he saw in the cruel light of decency the old but indomitable truism that Kate was what every girl is likely to be: somebody's sister now and

somebody's mother in some future day. He hated himself for the necessary hypocrisy that forced him to assume a careless tone as he called "Come in!"

The door swung back, and Joe Yarmy lurched in. There was an ugly set to his jaws, a light in his eyes like the glint from a revolver barrel.

Bob's uneasy glance caught a glimpse of Kate's hat pinned to the chair.

Joe Yarmy said:

"I'm lookin' for ma sista."


Rupert Hughes' brilliant story of this year 1919 will reach some high points of interest in the next, the February, issue of The Red Book Magazine.

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**Prof. I. HUBERT, Toledo, Ohio**

## A HUNCH ON HEREDITY

(Continued from page 53)

aint any silver-tongued orator to speak of. I haven't addressed any regular audience since I was in the Legislature. But if you really want me to—there isn't much of anything I wouldn't do for your daddy's boy."

**T**HE big audience that stretched for fifty yards in front of the band-stand in a vacant space just beyond the thickly settled portion of the boom city hushed its confused chatter, and a good many of its members exclaimed with surprise as Captain Bill came up the steps at the rear of the stand into the illumination of the flambeaux at its four corners, and followed Travis Hudston to the row of chairs that had been reserved for the speakers. Instantly the confusion of mind that Raber had counted on began to spread. Bill's name was whispered from driller to driller. What was the man who was reputed the wealthiest ex-Ranger in Texas doing on the stage at such a meeting as this?

A local I. W. W. leader called for order and introduced a local speaker. The man made a talk concerning only hours and wages. Another officer of the Spiller branch of "the one big union" followed him, and he too had nothing especially radical to say. Those who had come to the meeting expecting to hear violence preached began to get uneasy and disappointed. Then the chairman introduced "our friend and fellow-townsmen, Captain William T. Titus," and the crowd hushed itself.

"I have come here," Bill announced without preliminary salutation, "at the request of the son of one of the best friends I ever had, to introduce him and tell you who he is. I reckon a good many of you know who Laughin' Jack Hudston was, and how he come by his name. I was in the Rangers with Jack, and he shore did nearly laugh his head off when he was in the thick of a bad fight—but his laughin' didn't interfere with his shootin', any that could be noticed."

A murmur of approval rustled through the crowd; it was a form of reminiscence a Texas audience likes to hear.

"I taken part in quite a number of little affairs with Jack," Bill went on. "I knew him when he was just a young feller on the Bar V Triangle Ranch; and I knew him when he joined out with the Rangers and as long as he stayed in the service, and I knew him through all the rest of his life up to the very day he was killed; and there wasn't a yellow streak in him from his hat to his spurs. That's why I'm standing here to-night to introduce his boy and tell you something about him—because I think Jack Hudston would want me to do just what I'm here to do. But before I go any farther, I've got a little message I've been asked to give you, and I know you'll listen to it and abide by it, gentlemen, because it comes from the Governor of the State of Texas."

Some of the rougher spirits in the crowd showed dissatisfaction at this, and a voice well back in the audience cried:

"What's a capitalistic Governor got to do with this meeting—or a capitalistic oil-operator, either?" But Raber, Christian-sen and the other leaders who were aware of what was coming hushed them ostentatiously.

"What the Governor asked me to say to you, men of Spiller, was this: We in Texas aint afraid of publicity. We in Texas aint afraid of letting men say what's in their hearts. We in Texas believe in free speech. We've believed in it ever since the Mexican governors of Texas and Chihuahua denied it, and the men we've sprung from had to show 'em we meant it at the Alamo and at San Jacinto."

There was an outburst of applause. Bill had his audience.

"And the Governor asks you to let every speaker at this meeting who has got anything he wants to say, say it. We're all grown men, capable of figuring out for ourselves what is good and what is bad, what we want and what we don't want; and it don't do us any harm to listen—and it might do us a lot of good. So I'm asking you—and I'm speaking for the Governor—to hear what is to be said, and to listen respectfully, whether you agree or not. And the word will go out from here to-morrow that the State of Texas, and the city of Spiller, believe in free speech. Am I right?"

"Yes!" roared a good part of the crowd, with Raber and his lieutenants leading in the demonstration.

"I introduce to you, gentlemen, Mr. Travis Hudston of New York City," concluded Captain Titus.

**H**UDSTON, as he faced the audience bowing to loud applause, thought Bill must have been carried away by his own eloquence to have forgotten to tell the crowd more about who he personally was. He also regretted that the Captain had referred to him as a New Yorker; he would rather, on this occasion, have been credited to his native State. He tossed back his hair, as the applause began to lessen, held up his hand for more complete silence, and shouted in a trained voice that carried to the farthest reaches of the crowd:

"Comrades!"

There is no need to repeat the speech here; the transcript of what he said would be, albeit perhaps put in not as good English as he used, almost word for word what you have heard spouted by soap-box orators in many places. Or you have read it in reports of Red activities as discussed before Congressional committees, or in manifestoes issued by "left wings" so extremely left that the not-quite-as-crazy left wings of the most radical of parties have thrown them out, bag and baggage, and frantically disclaimed all responsibility for their ravings.

He spoke of production and division of its proceeds, of the inalienable right of men who work with their hands to have all the fruit of their labor, of an inevitable class war that can never end until all the remainder of the world bows to the



will of the proletariat. He knew Bill Titus was a man of his word, and not in months had he dared in a public place to come so near to speaking exactly what he thought.

Through his most radical utterances Bill sat listening intently, no frown of disapproval wrinkling his brow. The men in the audience who thought Hudston was going too far—some of them because he shocked them, some of them because they agreed but doubted the expediency of admitting quite so freely what was the true program of the "one big international union"—were astonished at the ex-Ranger's attitude. He actually looked as though he were enjoying it.

Hudston, carried away by his own enthusiasm, by the applause of a part of his audience, and by the fascination of his own voice which he loved, talked too much.

"What have we, the laborers of the world, to do with national flags?" he cried, and there was a little murmur that ought to have warned him. "What are the flags of capitalistic states and capitalistic nations to us? Pieces of bunting, sewed together, to which organized wealth commands that we shall bow down in what capital cunningly calls 'patriotism,' just as the state and the church have always combined to make mankind bow down before the fetiches of—"

There were shouts of "No!" "That'll be about all!" "That's going too far!" and an unorganized and hence ineffectual surge of some of the members of the crowd, while Raber and his followers cheered and shouted down the protesters near them. Material for an explosion was present, and Hudston, who now stood silent, glaring down upon the audience, had nearly lighted the match. The outbreak did not come, however, for it was no part of Captain Titus' program to allow a riot to be started by those who disapproved of the speaker, any more than by those who were his fellow-conspirators against constitutional government.

"Wait!" "Quiet!" "Cap'n Titus wants to speak!" Sam Burns and his old-timer friends started the demand for order. Gillespie's drillers helped it along. The uncertain in the audience swayed with them, and then Raber, who had wide experience with men in the mass and sensed more of an opposition than he had anticipated, added his voice and the voices of his lieutenants to the appeal for peace. The crowd quieted.

"It don't hurt us to listen!" The Captain's voice boomed over the heads of the crowd. "It don't hurt us to hear just what this young man and his friends want. I say all Americans ought to know it. I call on you, in the name of the Governor, in the name of the State itself, to let him have his say. Let's have free speech."

"That's it! Free speech!" yelled Raber and his friends and all of Bill's friends, combining in an overwhelming majority, and those in the crowd who did not approve lapsed into dissatisfied attention.

BUT Hudston was unable to go ahead with the same fire and assurance that had marked his previous words. He, like Raber, had now sensed the hostility of a surprisingly large portion of his audience; he didn't think it was half, but it was



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larger than he liked. He couldn't help remembering some of the reactions of Texas crowds, as he had heard his father speak of them, and there was a harsh undercurrent in the gathering that vaguely alarmed him.

He said nothing more about flags, but began to talk of sovietism, and what he said was the American misunderstanding of the soviet principle. He did not defend the Bolshevik administration of the soviet form of government, although he had intended to, but contented himself with demanding that before the Russian comrades be censured for what they had done and were doing, the world wait for the report of their accomplishments from "unbiased sources."

He wound up rather lamely with an appeal for sympathy with and membership in the one big union, and stepped back to his chair. The presiding officer rose, with glasses on his nose and a paper in his hand—a resolution, it might be inferred, which would commit the meeting to radical and probably "direct" action; but Captain Titus was at the front of the stage ahead of him and had begun to talk.

"This is a night of free speech," he began, "and I've got a few words I want to get out of my system, if you aint so filled up with oratory that you want to go home without hearing any more."

"Go on, Cap'n!" called Sam Burns from the edge of the crowd. "You can't say nothin' worse'n what he has."

**M**UTTERING came from Raber's men, shouts of encouragement from Bill's supporters, and a little note of laughter scattered through it all. Bill noted the laughter with appreciation. If he could get that reckless, daredevil bunch that really made up a mighty balance of power in this gathering to laughing, he would be content.

"We workingmen have got to hang together, just like my young friend from New York said."

Hudston, who had been getting himself settled in his chair and wiping his forehead, looked up quickly. This was the second time Bill had gone out of his way to emphasize Hudston's present place of residence.

A good many men tittered. Bill Titus, within the recollection of young persons, had never been regarded as within the category of laborers.

"It aint any cause for laughter," Bill defended indignantly. "We're all of us workingmen. Some of us"—he gestured indefinitely over the crowd—"have calluses on our hands. Some of us"—he embraced himself and Hudston in an including motion—"have calluses on our brains. Hold on!"—in mock protest as the jest won a laugh. "I didn't mean what you thought I meant—natchully." And he won another laugh. He grinned in what one who did not know him at all might have thought was confusion—but most of his audience were more or less acquainted with him.

"What I mean to say," he went on, "is that everybody that works, whether he does it with his head or his hands, ought to have a sight in the pot, in proportion to what he has on the table in front of him. That's according to Hoyle, aint it?"

"Oh, you table-stakes!" a young driller near the front cried, and there was some applause. Bill recognized the boy as a wild youth who had recently returned from France with medals and prestige and had shown signs of becoming inoculated with dangerous doctrines, and threw his reply directly at him:

"What would you do to the fellow, after you'd got your chips in the pot, who said the other players would divide it without giving you a show?" And he went on, before the boy or anybody else could answer:

"If Mr. Hudston had said that every feller who puts in chips—labor, invention, brains, money, nerve, whatever is needed—ought to get a sight, I would agree with him. Lots of you fellers know me. Anybody ever know me not to give a man a fair run for his money?"

"No," was the answer from a good many throats.

"Anybody claiming I haven't a right to sit into this little game that our friend is down here from New York advertisin'?" Or any other game that's got anything to do with how we folks live down here in the Lone Star State of Texas?"

**T**HE chorus was louder. Raber didn't like the look of things, and hurled a sudden interruption:

"I rise to a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Where does this sorta talk come in at a union meetin'?"

"Who asked me to talk, Mr. Raber?" demanded Bill. "My young friend from New York, didn't he? And who suggested to him that he do it? You, Mr. Raber. And as long as this is a free speech meetin'—"

If there was an end to the sentence, it was lost in laughter and jeers. "Oh, you free speech!" shouted the boy in front who had been overseas. "I'm strong for you, ol'-timer!"

"Don't you see he's tryin' to steal this meetin' away from us workin'men?" Raber cried angrily as the noise lessened. "Him, with not an hones' day's work to his credit for years?"

"Wait a minute!" Bill's call kept even the would-be disturbers quiet from curiosity. He had his right hand up in the air, palm outward, fingers spread. "I'll match calluses with you, Raber, this minute. When did you ever work with your hands? And at that," he told the crowd in booming confidence, "I haven't got but one callus on my hand. I used to have 'em on my laigs, from forkin' a hawse, and on both hands, from handling a rope and such, but they're all gone except one."

He lowered his hand, still palm toward them, to a point in front of his chin, and stroked the inside of his right thumb with the forefinger of his left hand.

"That's where a man used to grow a callus, handling a six-gun," he remarked, and completed the sentence significantly in Raber's direction: "And I've still got that one—because I've never figured to get entirely out of practice."

There were more cheers than protests.

"And now I've only got to say something I sort of overlooked when I made my first speech to-night, and then I'll sit down and give whoever else wants to free speech a little his chance. Mr. Hudston

and his friend Mr. Raber asked me to tell you what I know about him, and I promised; so of course I've got to make good—and that's why I got up and butted in a second time. And now they act like they didn't want me to."

There were loud cries of encouragement from the crowd.

"This boy's great-gran'daddy fought at San Jacinto. His gran'daddy was in the war between the States. His daddy was as brave a Ranger as I ever rode with. He worked, too, with his hands—and with his head. You men have been told to-night that maybe we want a government like Russia. He said, as near as I can make out, that everything ought to be divided, free and equal. You men with wives figure that out; they tried it in Russia, you know."

"That was capitalistic propaganda!" Hudston shouted. "It is only property that ought to be divided."

"Excuse me, suh," Bill said courteously, and turned again to the crowd. "I sort of got off my track; I was setting out to tell you about Travis Hudston, son of Laughin' Jack Hudston. You've heard, maybe, about how, after he got out of the Rangers and went into cattle-raisin', Jack had luck. As a matter of fact, it wasn't luck a-tall. Luck—regular, real luck—is spelled with a P. That's what Jack Hudston had—*pluck*. And when he went out one day to help a sheriff and a couple of Rangers do their duty by the State of Texas, and got killed, he left almost six hundred thousand dollars."—Bill was grinning broadly now—"every cent to this young soft-handed, tea-table working-man. He still has it, plus a good deal that it has earned in interest, so my bankin' friends tell me." He wheeled on Hudston and snapped a question:

"When are you going to divide it?"

**H**UDSTON was on his feet, facing the uproar. His face flushed. With Bill's sarcastic taunt in his ears, his self-possession left him and he sputtered absurdly.

Raber sprang into the breach.

"What's this got to do with what action us men in Spiller oughta take?" he demanded of the crowd. "This cussed old capitalist is tryin' to talk us out of it. We want direct action. To hell with capital!"

"You, Raber, keep quiet!" cried Bill. "And don't you try to start anything rough, because the Texas Rangers that are right in this crowd are going to get you first if you do—you first, and then two more: Christiansen and Mullins. And there's no use going after that gun you've got in your pocket, because Chicago gun-tricks don't go here."

His face was no longer smiling, but his eyes glistened coldly, and there was a timbre in his tone that thrilled friends and enemies as well as he gave the audience his peroration:

"Back in the days right after the war between the States, there were terrible times here in Texas. Listen, men! Your daddies have told you about them; some of us here can remember them. It's all over now, and almost forgotten, and I wouldn't even speak of it if Travis Hudston's grandfather hadn't done a man's part toward ending them. Texas was a



part of the Confederacy, and the Confederacy lost. And then some things happened that would never have happened if a poor insane man hadn't killed Abraham Lincoln, and the men of Texas—and old Jim Hudston was one of them—sent word to Washington City. 'We can't stand it,' they said. 'We've put aside the Stars and Bars forever. We're back under the Stars and Stripes. God helping us, we'll aid in rebuilding our State as part of one nation under that flag. But either you'll give us a government such as white men are entitled to, with liberty and justice for all, or hopeless as it is, we shall rebel. And that rebellion will not end in surrender; it will never be put down until the last man of us has died like our ancestors who made holy ground of the Alamo.' And the big-hearted, silent soldier in the White House heard the message, and Texas became free from the oppression of the carpet-bagger."

THERE was a tumultuous outburst that convinced Bill he needed only to make his final point.

"Under two flags Texas gained freedom," he cried, "—one the Lone Star banner that struck terror to Santa Anna at San Jacinto; the other the Stars and Stripes that half a century later Texans shed their blood for at Château Thierry and in the Argonne. Were either of these flags mere 'pieces of bunting, sewed together'?"

"I'll say they were *not*!" yelled the young soldier near the bandstand, and more than three-quarters of the crowd cheered him and Bill.

"And who and what were the men who crowded Texas to the wall after she had been honorably defeated in the war of the States—who came from God knows where to rule and govern, until Travis Hudston's gran'daddy and thousands of other good men threatened to die deliberately for the shame of it? Carpet-baggers!"

He gritted the word.

"Where do *you* come from, Raber? Chicago. Where do *you* come from, Christiansen? North Dakota—perhaps. And *you*, Mullins? From Cleveland, isn't it?" Bill laughed and waved a hand toward Hudston. "And our poor little rich workingman who hasn't lived in Texas since he was sixteen, and has forgotten the kind of liberty his kin fought for, is from New York."

He made a gesture of ineffable disgust and repeated the epithet than which, for all the years that have passed, there is only one more offensive in Texas:

"All carpet-baggers!"

Raber, Christiansen and Mullins were outlanders; the phrase meant little or nothing to them; they did not even know they had been insulted. But Hudston? Bill waited almost breathlessly for the youth's reaction, and did not have to wait two seconds.

Hudston was on his feet, his features now pale and distorted, his teeth showing between drawn lips. "You are a liar!" he shouted, and leaped across the stage, fists clenched tightly, to say it squarely in Bill's face.

The crowd fell tensely quiet, and Bill made his next move with lightning decision. He had the sympathy of the mass

up to that moment, but he could lose it more quickly than he had secured it. If he did not resent Hudston's denunciation, he, Captain Bill Titus, would be set down in the minds of a thousand observers as less a man than they had always heard he was. If he struck the youth, violence, to be avoided, had been invoked—and he had begun it. He could not hope, then, to prevent the wilder Texans in the crowd, whom he had aroused against Raber and his fellow-agitators, from mobbing them.

He laughed loudly, and as he laughed, his left hand shot out and seized Hudston by the collar, spinning him around. The youth was taller than Bill, and heavier, but he was soft, and the Captain's muscles, for all his more than sixty years, were hard and conditioned. He had, too, a lifetime's experience of quick physical action, and young Hudston for years had exercised only his voice.

As the young man whirled helplessly, Bill swung his right hand, wide open, below the level of his waist, and added its force to the push he gave with his left. Hudston went stumbling. Bill laughed again. "Oh, go on, you—boy!" he cried.

There had been no great effort behind that right-handed slap; it had looked careless and contemptuous; but not a man in the watching hundreds missed the point. Hudston had been *spanked*.

They also laughed.

Raber, Christiansen, Mullins and their closer friends, huddled well together for mutual protection, began to edge out of the crowd.

"Let 'em go, fellow-Texans," Bill shouted, still grinning. "Their teeth have been pulled."

No crowd that is laughing can be a dangerous mob. It let the agitators pass unmolested.

"Is there anybody else with a speech to make?" Titus cried. "It's free. If not, maybe the chairman would like to call this meeting adjourned."

BUT the chairman had already fled. Bill turned then, to find himself facing Hudston—a much different Hudston from the self-satisfied parlor internationalist who had spoken so glibly.

"You insulted me," he stammered thickly. "You—you made a fool of me. And I'm—I'm going to kill you on sight—if I'm able."

"I didn't make as big a fool of you as you made of yourself," Bill told him.

"I'll kill you on sight," the youth repeated. "I've got a pistol,—my father's,—and I'm going to get it. I'm going to get it and kill you—or you're going to kill me." Tears of mingled anger and humiliation stood in his eyes. "If you aren't armed, get armed. I don't give a damn if they hang me for it."

Bill nodded and answered him gravely, as man to man.

"Not to-night," he said. "I'm too busy to-night. But if you will hang on that li'l ol' pistol and come along Main Street at about a quarter of eight to-morrow maw'nin', you'll find me somewhere along in front of Sam Burns' store. Your friends will tell you where it is. I'll see that the police don't interfere."

Hudston swallowed, started to speak again, gave it up and turned abruptly

away. Bill watched him speculatively, and after a moment smiled the ghost of a smile. He himself left the band-stand at once, and after pushing through sauntering groups who were still talking of the meeting and wanted to delay him to tell him how much they admired his handling of it, came finally to Mr. Burns' emporium, where he went to a door in the rear and found Burns and a number of other men waiting in a back room.

"Sam," he said, "Trav Hudston is plannin' to shoot me along about quarter of eight to-morrow. Will you, by and by, take a walk over to the mayor's house and tell him to pass the word along to the police to keep their hands off? Me being a Ranger for the time being, they aint got any call to interfere. But don't let 'em tell anybody I'm a Ranger, especially where it'll get to Hudston."

"The fool!" Burns ejaculated. "Don't he know you can kill him while he's getting ready?"

"I reckon so."

"He wont be there," a stern-featured man named Turner opined. "We know about what you and him said up there on the band-stand; there must 'a' been twenty heard it. He was het up at that minute, but he'll have cold feet long before maw'nin'. No suh, he wont be there."

"I wonder," Bill mused. "Maybe you're right—but I figure he will. He'll know he's committin' suicide, or he'll *think* he knows it, but I'm figuring he'll be there, with ol' Jack's gun on—and I don't suppose he's handled a weapon since he left Texas, which is right close to fifteen years ago. And as I remember it, he hadn't handled one much before that. . . . Yes suh. He's shore aimin' to commit suicide. And for me to throw lead at him would certainly be plumb murder."

"What do you mean, Bill?" Burns demanded. "After what's happened, *you* can't stay away."

"I don't guess I can," Bill agreed simply. "But I don't have to hurt him, do I? You wasn't thinkin' I'd hurt Jack Hudston's boy, was you, Sam?"

"But he'll—You don't mean you expect to take the chance of *missing* him!"

"Maybe it wouldn't be such a chance. He's nervous, and he'll be more so before maw'nin'. Likely he wont sleep a wink and be shaky as blazes. He wont figure he's got a chance if he shoots slow, and if he tries to shoot fast, he probably couldn't hit a cow at ten feet. I'm thinking he'll shoot fast. At least, he will at first. The only thing that sort of puzzles me is what he'll do if, after he's wasted

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three or four cartridges, he finds I aint hittin' him. Maybe he'll slow up and take aim. If he does— Say, fellers, I want every man of you to promise one thing. If any accident happens, I want him given a fair chance. Let the jury know that I had agreed to meet him and that I had insulted him—like I shorely did. And get some ol'-timers on it—ol'-timers that will appreciate what it means to be called a carpet-bagger."

"Great snakes, man! You aint goin' to let him fire six shots at you without disabling him, are you?"

"I don't know," Bill said seriously. "I haven't entirely figured out what to do, yet. If he had only two cartridges in his pistol, say, I bet he'd fire 'em so quick he couldn't hit me anyway."

"But he'll have six."

"Maybe," Bill said. "And maybe not. I've got a little scheme running in my head regarding that. If he's a bit the kind of man his father was, it'll work. If he isn't— Maybe it'll be sort of a gamble, but I'm going to play a little hunch on heredity. That boy sort of forgot the rotten kind of a gang he's been traveling with when he got mad with me. For a minute or two, anyway, he was all regular Texas human being. It's worth a little gamble to try to keep him so. I'm going to play it thataway, anyhow. . . . Jack Hudston was a darn' fine man, fellers."

TRAVIS HUDSTON came down Main Street at quarter of eight. Behind him were Raber and Christiansen and Mullins, and twenty-five or thirty of the most radical and desperate of their friends, nearly all of them of foreign blood. Hudston was coatless, and a forty-five revolver swung in a holster from his belt—hung too high and too far back. His face was colorless, and his features were drawn and haggard. He had his teeth set, trying his best to achieve calmness, but his hands trembled.

As he saw Captain Bill come out of Burns' store, alone, the youth hesitated almost imperceptibly, then stepped resolutely into the street. His followers remained on the sidewalk. The spectators, and there were many, filled windows and doorways and peered about the corners of buildings.

They were still a good fifteen yards apart when Bill threw his hands wide from his body and, so holding them, strode into the highway. He wore a coat, unbuttoned, and his low-hanging holster showed plainly beneath it. At his surprising gesture Hudston stopped short and waited, his eyes wide, watching.

"Trav Hudston," Bill called clearly, "you know me, and I know you. You know that I understand handling a pistol some, and I know that if you understand one, you probably aint in practice. You're entitled to a handicap; it aint any more than fair to equalize things by giving you one."

"I ought to be three times as fast as you. I reckon I could shoot five or six times while you was shooting twice. Begin when you get ready. I'm going to give you four shots before I go after my gun a-tall. But if you haven't put me out of business with those first four shots, don't lose any time with the last two, because it might be fatal. Come on, son! Let's go!"

A murmur of ejaculations from the spectators followed this startling announcement of terms, and subsided instantly into silence. Hudston stared in astonishment, almost as if he had not heard, or hearing, could not understand. Then, slowly, clumsily, he drew his pistol—and fired four shots into the air.

The morning train, for once on time, had come to a stop while Bill was making his declaration, although nobody in the crowd heard it, and around a corner three blocks behind Hudston five men, at the sound of the shots, came running. Bill saw them and recognized the lean figure of Captain Bob Dalton in the lead.

With the explosion of the fourth wasted cartridge, Bill's hand whipped to his pistol. Hudston tried to aim and fire in Bill's direction—tried too nervously and fired too quickly. The bullet sped harmlessly past its mark, two feet distant.

And then the spectators, gasping with excitement, saw that Bill was tugging at his revolver, and that it had caught in his holster and would not come loose. Trav Hudston saw it too. Slowly he braced himself and took careful aim. His hand shook, but the wobbling muzzle finally settled to cover the Captain's body, well down to take care of the recoil, as his father had taught him. Bill's hand was still dragging impotently at his gun, but he was looking straight across into the youth's eyes and smiling. "Get busy, son!" he shouted. "You'll have to hurry!"

ONE second the boy stared, trying to press the trigger. Then he dropped his pistol on the ground with a sob.

"You killed the man that killed my father," he said, choking. "Damn it, I can't!"

"I can. The old interferin' hound!" snarled Raber. "Here we go, men! Come on!" And his hand snapped toward his pocket. Before it got there, Bill's first bullet smashed his wrist and the second bullet his shoulder.

"You're wrong, Rabowski," the old man exulted. "My gun only sticks when I'm fightin' with my friends."

It was waving now across the face of the surging crowd of Reds, and out of the open doorway of Burns' store flowed swiftly a stream of grim-faced, stern-eyed men, ten of them, all middle-aged, all competent, each carrying a ready weapon.

"Ranger Service!" Bill shouted, as the disciples of violence, who had leaped forward snarling, hesitated. "Don't go after any firearms, *hombres!* Put your hands up, and keep 'em up! In the name of the State of Texas!"

Trav Hudston picked up his father's pistol from the dust at his feet and came running to stand beside Bill. "I'm with you—and for it!" he panted. "I've got only one cartridge, but—"

Captain Bob Dalton and his Rangers were there, taking the bad men from behind, covering them with six-shooters, disarming them, handcuffing together those who were found to have guns or knives—nearly all of them.

Bill lowered his pistol and smiled affectionately on Hudston.

"You don't shoot like your daddy, Trav," he said. "But by golly, when it gets down to cases, you *think* like him."

# How I Ate Two Pounds A Day Off My Weight

An amazing discovery in weight reduction. No starving, no medicines, no special foods, no course of baths, no exercises, no "mind cure."

**A**REN'T you heavier than you used to be?"

This would nearly always be the first remark I'd hear whenever I met an old friend or acquaintance. And they were right. No doubt about it, I was fast putting on weight to a noticeable extent.

At first I took it as a sure sign of vigorous health. I had always thought that the accumulation of fat was Nature's way of storing up health and energy—a sort of reserve to draw upon in time of need. So I revelled in my good fortune and felt genuinely sorry for my friends who were not so favored by Nature.

But soon my condition began to be serious. I was getting altogether too fat. My increasing stoutness began to be about all I could think of—it entirely occupied my mind. My friends began to mention it. I couldn't walk a block without puffing. My heart became affected. It was getting serious.

I had always led an active life, being fond of athletics, horse-back riding and dancing. My increasing weight made it difficult for me to "go in" for these things. I simply couldn't get around as fast as the others—even my walk was different; and besides, any sort of physical exertion became unpleasant to me. I don't need to go into details, for anyone with a tendency to stoutness will well know what I mean.

This lack of exercise could lead to but one thing: I took on weight to an alarming extent, and I shall never forget the day when I realized that I was slowing down mentally as well as physically. I lost interest in my work and all social affairs. Anything requiring exertion was passed up. Understand me, please. I am not trying to praise my former self and figure; I'm simply telling how my mental and physical powers and pleasures decreased as fat was increased.

You can probably guess my next move—nearly every "Fat" woman has taken it. I became a follower of the "simple life."



I cut down on my diet—and felt hungry all the time. Then I took a course of baths. According to weights taken "before and after" the baths cut down my weight. But within a day or so the weight was back again. The baths had only a temporary effect. And it seemed to me that they were sapping my vitality.

Then I tried the plan of going without liquids; of omitting certain foods from my all-too-meagre diet; of eating widely advertised "reducing foods" and finally of taking medicine.

By this time life had lost much of its joy for me. As my weight increased so did

my distress. I simply had to do something. So I started to find out all I could about obesity. I questioned physicians, surgeons, army doctors, health specialists and a lot of women and men who were similarly afflicted. Soon I became a walking encyclopedia on weight reduction. But still I continued to put on weight.

One day I experienced a shock. I was reading some health statistics by life insurance companies. These showed conclusively that in addition to causing mental and physical inefficiency, fatness brings on a serious chain of illnesses, such as heart trouble, diabetes, stomach and intestinal trouble, apoplexy and the like. And then I read that fat people die young. No supposition about this. Plain, cold, hard facts, drawn from life insurance statistics, covering the experiences of tens of thousands of people and several generations.

My lucky star must have been working for me about this time, for I ran across just the kind of practical help I was looking for. A friend advised me to read "Weight Control, The Basis of Health," by the famous Food Specialist, Eugene Christian.



"Right from the start I reduced my weight by two pounds a day and felt better than ever."

This course, in the form of simple little lessons, which the publishers offer to send on free trial, completely upset my own personal opinions and all that I had learned about obesity and health. It showed that when one starts to put on weight, it is not a sign of health, but of ill-health. Obesity is actually a disease. Then it showed that most of the tables of weights indicating what a person of a certain age and height should weigh are all wrong and why.

Then there were some startling new ideas about the maintenance of health and of mental and physical vigor. Not theories, but hard practical facts, drawn from the experiences of thousands of men and women in all conditions of life.

The remarkable part of it all was that there were no fads in Eugene Christian's methods, no special baths, no self-denying diet, no medicine, no exercises—nothing out of the ordinary. Simply go on living a normal life, eat appetizing, delicious foods, properly combined, do pretty much as you please, and still one could reduce her weight to normal in a very short time by entirely natural methods.

It all sounded too good to be true, but I decided to give the methods a fair test. Right from the start I reduced my weight by two pounds each day. My former figure and energy began to return. Not the slightest hardship was involved—a most unusual thing in weight-reduction. I had always enjoyed my meals, but now my food tasted even more delicious than ever. Walking became a pleasure to me again, instead of a grind. I was bubbling over with life and energy. My flesh grew hard and firm. And, soon, very much to my surprise I was able

to wear fabrics and colors which my stoutness had forced me to abandon.

When I now look upon my former condition of stoutness it all seems like a horrible nightmare, for not only did I quickly regain my normal weight, but I've maintained it ever since. To look at me today no one would realize that not so long ago I was a "fat" woman. My quick reduction in weight—an average of two pounds a day—my vigorous health and active mind of today I all owe to Eugene Christian. I only wish I had the means to distribute his remarkable Course to every woman afflicted with obesity, for I feel that Eugene Christian is rendering a great and genuine service to humanity through his wonderful work. I have recommended Eugene Christian's Course to many others and have had the satisfaction of seeing it produce results just as remarkable as in my case.

Alma Virginia Lee

Much could be written about the cause and the remedy for excessive stoutness and Eugene Christian's methods. But that is unnecessary, for you can, without a penny of expense or the slightest obligation, test out in the privacy of your home the same methods that Miss Lee and thousands of others have used with such remarkable and satisfying results.

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Then if you decide to keep the Course, as you surely will, remit only five dollars in full payment. And if for any reason you do not wish to keep the Course send it back within five days and you will owe us nothing. Obviously, an offer such as this could not be made unless the publishers were confident that Eugene Christian's methods will produce remarkable results for you.

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"To look at me today, no one would realize that not so long ago I was a 'fat' woman."



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## PRETTY WOMEN

(Continued from page 82)

folks—Haff, for one. For the sight of young Mrs. Greenman, pretty as a Cecile Brunner rose in her yellow dinner-gown, put friends and all friends' troubles out of his mind. But his own troublesome thoughts over that look of hers of the morning loomed into gloomy prominence. And a certain resentment added itself to the gloom. After all, Annemay had no right to look at him as though he were a medium-priced hat of good material that for some reason excited enthusiasm in no one. Oh, he didn't doubt Annemay loved him—just then she passed him the little silver salt-cellar with a wifely smile of affection; he didn't doubt her love at all. There had been plenty of other men for her to choose from, and she had chosen him of her own free will. But—

AS the days went on, the feeling of being a very ordinary person, a person indeed, marked by no outstanding faults or virtues, took possession of young Oswald Greenman, and it swamped in a way the satisfying feeling of possession of a young, beloved and pretty wife. Even the fact that the Greenman wholesale-millinery house, under the combined control of the employees and himself, overcontrolled and managed by a group of elderly high-salaried men whom his shrewd old mother had trained, was prospering wondrously, did not cheer him greatly, though of course it was comforting in its way.

He had been able to forget Haff for the most part lately. However, the recollection was disagreeable. And meeting that plump, blond young man in a theater-lobby one evening, he was made uncomfortable further by the odd, cold, constrained nod that he and Annemay received from the aggrieved Mr. Meadows.

Haff was with another young man. The beautiful Luella Goldwell doubtless was on the stage. Oswald tried to pick her out from the bevy of silk-tighted young women who danced on, but could not. And then he forgot even her name. A blond dancer threw a rose to the man across the aisle from Oswald—a good-looking young fellow.

"I needn't be jealous—it wasn't to you," murmured Annemay lightly in his ear.

"No," he murmured in return, lightly enough. Though—

Well, he certainly was not put out because a chorus-girl did not single him out for bizarre attention in front of a mirthful house. But he noticed that Annemay's gray-and-violet eyes turned with smiling curiosity toward the good-looking young fellow who was recipient of the attention. It may have been that young Oswald Greenman had grown decidedly morbid. For now he could not help musing: "Ah! Only a question of time, doubtless, till—till she takes a longer look at some other fellow."

And as the days went on, he kept on being wretched most of the time. Possibly if the elderly leading men of the wholesale house had not managed so well, the young chief stockholder, who

once had been sole stockholder would not have brooded so futilely on his cankered life, having something else to think about. But as it was, he almost wrapped himself in a mantle of bitter brooding. This because he fancied that every day or so Annemay again gave him that brief yet long speculative look.

AND then one bright afternoon Oswald Greenman emerged from the plate-glass front doors of his prosperous establishment just in time to reach the boulevard a block east, in time to witness a young woman take a misstep that drew a little cry of pain from her and then an acute startled balancing on one foot. Then, with a moan, she sank to the pavement.

A dozen masculine boulevardiers hurried forward. She was a pretty woman, as well as young, and well-dressed even for the flaunting, well-dressed boulevard. Her fur-trimmed *tailleur* fitted her exquisitely. Her black eyes and hair were lovely of their kind. Her small feet were brown-satin shod.

"I've sprained my ankle!" she exclaimed as several assisted her to rise, Oswald being one. "If you would call a taxi—" She looked, excluding the other men, directly at Oswald Greenman, which decidedly pleased him, though he didn't stop to realize it till later.

"My car is parked right over here," cried he at once. "I'll take you home."

"Lucky boob!" murmured one of the other assisters. "Wish it—"

"Oh—thank you," cried the young woman, and bit her lip as though to bite back pain.

Oswald Greenman had his car at the curb in the least possible time and assisted her in. Her home was with a sister-in-law in a white-stone North Side apartment. Her name was Kitty Grinchley.

That evening Oswald told Annemay of the incident. He was slightly nettled to find that she treated the matter indifferently, supplementing it by relating that that day she had seen a little newsboy caught and bruised by a motor's mud-guard. He wanted, though he sheepishly self-admitted the wanting was a bit puerile, to describe to Annemay just how this good-looking young woman, not a newsboy, had singled him out from among a crowd of other men. But of course there are some things one can't with real dignity do.

However, he felt that politeness necessitated phoning Miss Grinchley a day or so later to ascertain the state of the ankle. Her sister-in-law said it was bad—quite inflamed.

Being concerned and being innately polite, the next day or so he phoned again—and by this time thought so little of the matter that he really did not remember to mention to Annemay that he had made the further polite queries. Miss Grinchley was able to come to the telephone. She thanked him prettily for his concern, rethanked him for bringing her home. And on Mr. Oswald Greenman's part, that would have ended the inci-



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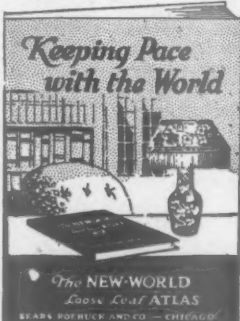
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dent entirely. But the next day Miss Grinchley phoned him—at his office at the wholesale house. She had forgotten, said she, to mention the day before that the day he was so good as to drive her home he had left his gloves on a chair. "Oh—did I?" said he. "I knew I'd lost a pair somewhere lately."

"And wont you call out sometime for them? Some evening?"

He was minded to ask her to save him the trouble by mailing them. But that would have seemed, he reflected, not exactly considerate. Then he was minded to tell her to throw 'em away. They were rather an old pair. But that too seemed not the right thing to say. "Oh, I'll drop around sometime for them," he finally said lamely.

However, he did not do it. Filbert, the credit man, Helbling of the straw department, Perkins the engineer, Sweetson of the shipping-department and various other people that were a part of Oswald Greenman's daily hours interfered with a daytime call. Evenings—well, he was married to Annemay.

But some days later, Miss Grinchley brought his gloves to him—in his office at the wholesale house. The ankle was well, and she was radiant. Young Mr. Greenman admitted at once that she was even prettier than he had remembered her. Anna Deneen's oldish gray pompadour turned from typewriter inquisitively at the sight of the caller and the gloves.

Miss Grinchley chatted brightly a few minutes, then left. It was around one o'clock. When Oswald went out for lunch ten minutes later, however, she was chatting, at the corner, with a woman friend. At sight of him she turned away from her friend. Afterward Oswald Greenman couldn't recall just how it was that the invitation to lunch with him was drawn from him. She had said absently that she was on her way to a tea-room—in a hurry, too.

"I've got a busy afternoon, and I shouldn't really have taken the trouble to go clear up to your office," she remarked. She added that, being a woman, she'd not get a waiter's eye, either, till every man in the room had been served.

After all it had been a nuisance for her to return those old gloves. Oswald Greenman laughed and offered to see that a waiter hustled. Over salad and coffee he told her he was married, and she confided that she was engaged to an awfully nice fellow. And Miss Grinchley had been truthful. When her small jeweled wrist-watch—on a small white wrist—showed one-forty, she gasped in dismay and said she had to run.

"I'm ashamed," she added contritely, looking at her uneaten salad. "Wasting good food—you'll never buy me a lunch again!"

Oh, the power of suggestion! He took Miss Grinchley to lunch again one day—when he again happened to meet her near the wholesale house. And as, passing a flower stand, she paused to "Oh!" impulsively, he bought her a corsage bouquet of violets.

In the next eight days Miss Grinchley dropped into Oswald Greenman's office to chat with him once about a small investment in which she needed advice, once about not much of anything. Anna

Deneen's oldish gray eyes shot hard at the pretty young woman. And at the second call Anna distinctly sniffed, being an oldish young woman of fixed ideas in regard to married men's conduct.

But there was nothing wrong. He was not in the least unfaithful to Annemay, while Miss Grinchley often mentioned that she was engaged to a nice young man. One evening when Annemay was entertaining the apprentice-girls from the wholesale house and had asked him to take himself off, as the girls were constrained with him around, he called on Miss Grinchley, who was alone at her sister-in-law's apartment. The evening was a pleasant memory for several days.

Then it happened that he was obliged to go to New York on a business trip. Some one with large authority had to act in the lagging resumption of imports. And it may be recorded, as giving light on the real state of Oswald Greenman's feelings, that he never even thought of letting Miss Grinchley know, but that his face grew long and sad when Annemay could not accompany him because two cousins from Iowa were due for a visit. "Darn 'em!" he declared.

"Yes, I think so, too," sighed Annemay, disconsolately. "I could cry!"

WHEN Oswald got back, Annemay met him at the station, cross, pink-cheeked and pretty, cross because the cousins from Iowa had decided not to come after all, and she could just as well have accompanied him; pink-cheeked because of seeing him after their first separation since they were married; pretty because Annemay Greenman, née Doppy, was always pretty.

Her husband, suit-case in hand, never even recalled that he was returning to the town that harbored one Miss Grinchley.

At once Annemay wanted to know: "Did you look at any pretty women in New York?"

Some of her returning husband's satisfaction faded. That was bringing up disagreeable memories.

"No," he said coldly.

"Sure?"—with a little laugh, as she slipped her arm through his.

Her laughing, too-sure tone irritated him.

"You know I didn't," he declared huffily. If Annemay had been an older wife, she might have understood the tone. Being a young one, and knowing no reason why her natural query should have irritated a husband, she paid little attention to the tone of his voice.

But instead she said absent-mindedly: "Yes, I know it."

"Oh, you do?"—rather bitterly.

"Of course!"—placidly. "And—and dear, I was thinking while you were gone what a lucky girl I am! Other wives may imagine or know of cheap, ugly pages in their husbands' life—but I know that in yours there aren't any, and never will be any. I—I don't think, Oswald, I would keep on loving a man like—like some men." She was blushing, a little ashamed of the sudden confidence which his absence had inspired. "And ever since that morning you told me there had never been anyone but me, I've loved you more than I did before, Oswald!"

"Oh—you have?"—slowly ejaculated

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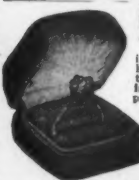
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TOWN ..... R. B.

her surprised husband. For a full minute he stared at her, digesting what she had said. He recalled the morbid depths of his own power of fancy.

But the brick-red flush that crept over his ordinarily medium-complexioned young face was followed fatuously by a vast grin—a grin of amazed contentment—a grin that lasted all through the ride home, through the evening, and was on hand the next morning for breakfast and for office and while later he reported to various heads and managers the results of his trip.

On the face of them, these results were not altogether satisfactory. Having broken most of its business ribs, the world was not getting the poor old brittle bones mended as fast as it would like. Imports, exports and such, it was feared, would never regain their old welded perfection. But from the young man's happy manner in reporting, several astute men in the wholesale house got the impression that the situation was not so serious as the trade journals pessimistically reported.

Oswald Greenman wore his grin through the afternoon, even addressing oldish Miss Deneen with a jocularity that caused her to mistype two letters. And when she later, with tart, critical voice, told him that a Miss Grinchley was on the wire and did he care to come to the phone or didn't he, he still wore his happy grin.

Miss Grinchley was downstairs and would like to talk personally to him.

"Well," said Oswald rather hesitantly, "come up." The moods of men are as fickle as the winds of April. He wondered carelessly what on earth the woman wanted this time to see him about.

She came up. And having come, she made a surprising request. She desired to talk to him alone—this with a nod of her pretty dark head at Anna Deneen.

Oswald Greenman was surprised but unsuspicious. He nodded at Anna to withdraw—which she did with compressed lips and an eloquent side-glance at his pretty caller.

"I want to talk to you alone," repeated Miss Grinchley when Anna had taken her notes and self into an adjoining room.

"Yes?"—politely, even cordially. "Yes." Her eyes were smiling; her voice was cool; but her expression was peculiar. "About our little acquaintance—yours and mine."

"What do you mean?" demanded the young man.

"You left town without saying goodbye."

"Why—well, I suppose I should have phoned you," he admitted, struggling between pure astonishment and a dawning suspicion. "But I was gone only a few days. And anyway—"

"Yes?"

"Why—anyway—"

As he evidently did not know what to say at her cool attack, Miss Grinchley, who was a direct young woman, came at once to the point. She laid her cards on the table.

"Mr. Greenman, would you like your wife—I hear you're very fond of her—to know that you have lunched me three times?"

"Say! Every time I just happened to

meet you on the Avenue!" He had jumped to his startled feet.

"Yes," she assented sweetly, "but that sounds so odd. She might not believe it. And you bought me some flowers."

"Once! And you almost hinted; you stopped at the stand—"

"Yes. But that will sound odd too. And you phoned me several times—insistently, I might say."

"Say! What is this? Blackmail?"

"Such an ugly word!" sweetly murmured Miss Grinchley. "Let's not use it—for a while. You called on me one evening—stayed late."

"Well—yes, I did. But—"

"And I've been up here at your office several times. I'm sure that grayish-haired stenographer will recall my visits."

"Say! What are you trying to put over?"

"Would you like your wife to know all about—me?" she asked calmly, taking out a bit of chamois to powder her pretty nose.

If during the day Oswald Greenman had at any time worn a grin, no one could have guessed it from his present wild gaping at his visitor.

Oh, the psychological moment! Miss Kitty Grinchley belonged to those who intuitively can step on one. For no one could have told her that whereas a few days back Oswald Greenman would not have disrelished having his pretty wife hear that he was indulging in a small flirtation with a good-looking woman who seemed to like him pretty well, to-day he would squirm with anguish at her hearing it—after her impulsive confidence on his return.

"I don't believe you ever sprained your ankle!" he angrily accused.

"Of course not," she laughed. "And if I'd had to hang around your front doors another day waiting for a chance to pretend to, the cop might have moved me on."

"Oh, you—you—"

"Would you like Mrs. Greenman to know about it all?" she repeated.

"You're simply a—"

"Would you?"

"I'll have you arrested!"

"That'll be nice—for the newspapers and your wife!"

"I'll—"

"Now! Think it over calmly," she advised, and touched a lipstick to her pretty red mouth.

He glared at her. He half took a threatening step toward her. He almost annihilated her with his wild eyes.

"Think it over calmly," she repeated gently.

"How—how much money do you want?" he gulped, and got out his check-book.

"Ah! I thought you'd look at it that way. I want enough for my husband and me to live on for—for a year. I could make it longer, but that'll be enough for you, for him, and for me."

"Your husband?"

"Husband to be. Your friend, Haff Meadows."

"What!"

"Yes, your friend Haff."

"He's engaged"—excitedly—"to another girl—named Luella."

"Oh, my dear man!"—with an exas-



"Jimmy is landing orders where we never could get business before—and when I tell you that last week alone he cleared \$193 you can judge for yourself that Jimmy is getting along."

# "He didn't think he could sell goods

*—but today he's the biggest producer on our payroll"*

*Jimmy Cameron thought he wasn't cut out for a salesman's job—but \$27.50 a week seemed to be his limit for advancement as bookkeeper—and he simply had to have more money. So he made the break—and within nine months this man "who thought he couldn't sell goods" was averaging \$110 a week as road salesman. How he did it makes a story that every man who feels the need of earning more can read with profit.*

By CLIFTON D. HAMMELL

**J**IMMY Cameron is the wonder salesman of our business. When Jimmy opens up his case of samples and unwinds his line of sales talk it seems as if the customer's pencil just naturally gravitates towards Jimmy's order book. There isn't a phase of the selling game in which Jimmy isn't proficient. He's a wizard at getting an audience with his prospect. He studies his customer and presents his sales story so as to overcome every possible objection. He knows how to drive his arguments home—and he's a master of the art of closing the sale. From the instant he enters the customer's door till he goes out with the order in his pocket, he is in absolute control of the interview. Jimmy's landing orders where we never could get business before—and when I tell you that his salary and commissions for the last four months have averaged over \$110 a week and that last week alone he cleared \$193, you can judge for yourself that Jimmy is getting along.

## Jimmy Simply Had to Earn More Money

You would hardly believe that only nine months ago Jimmy Cameron was a \$27.50 bookkeeper. More than that, it looked as if he was always going to stay a bookkeeper. We needed more salesmen—as we almost always do—and as Sales Manager I literally combed our organization for available sales timber. Jimmy looked as if he might make good material for my department, and I put

the proposition up to him. He didn't seem altogether sure he could handle a sales job, however, and asked a day to think it over. Next morning he came into my office and announced that he had decided not to accept my offer.

"You see, it's this way, Mr. Hammell, I don't think I could ever make a salesman. Right now as I'm talking to you my knees are shaking so I can hardly stand up. I need more money—in fact, I've simply got to find some way to increase my income because expenses are increasing so much at home. But I'm afraid I never was cut out to be a salesman."

I tried to convince him that he might be mistaken, but I saw it was no use, so dropped the matter.

But hardly three weeks passed before Jimmy was back to see me again—and this time to apply for a sales position. I was a little surprised to see his change of attitude, but he seemed so sure of himself that I gave him a trial—and I have already outlined how he has made good.

## A \$27.50 Bookkeeper Becomes a \$110 a Week Salesman

How did he do it? I felt sure something pretty important must have happened to transform a diffident bookkeeper into the star salesman of our house. So one day when Jimmy came into the office with a bigger sheaf of orders than usual, I asked him frankly for his story.

"Sometimes, Mr. Hammell, I have to pinch myself to be sure it's all true. Nine months ago no one could have convinced me that I could ever be a salesman. But I simply had to earn more money somehow. And one day shortly after I talked with you I ran into a salesman friend of mine who made me think that possibly the selling game wasn't so hard to get into after all. He belonged to a sales organization—the National Salesmen's Training Association—which seemed to have exactly what I was looking for.

## How He Learned to Sell

"The N.S.T.A.—as it is commonly known—is an organization of top-notch salesmen formed for the express purpose of training men for positions as city or traveling salesmen. A further service rendered to members of the Association is its Free Employment Bureau that helps its members find the kind of job for which they are best

fitted. I found the course of training of the N.S.T.A. to be just what I needed. It takes all the "mystery" out of salesmanship—you learn how to prepare the "Selling Talk"—how to approach the prospect—how to manage the interview—how to close the sale. In fact, it makes all of the processes of salesmanship so simple that it is hard to imagine how anyone could fail to become a good salesman by following the principles they outline.

"But the most practical feature of their course is the fact that it links ability to opportunity and fits you to earn while you learn. When I came in to you that morning to apply for a sales position I had only completed a part of the training, but I already felt confident I could swing a selling job. And in my work as salesman for you I have found innumerable occasions to use what I learned from the N.S.T.A. course.

## Salesmen Are Needed—Now

"I am telling my story so much in detail because I imagine there are a lot of other fellows who feel the same lack of confidence I did—and who would welcome the opportunity to increase their pay. I can see no reason why any average clerk, bookkeeper, printer, mechanic or farm boy should not be able to do as well as I have. You need not know the first thing about selling to begin—the N.S.T.A. trains you from the ground up—gives you a complete insight into selling methods—in your spare time—without making it necessary that you give up your present position until you are ready to begin selling—and then through its Employment Bureau you secure a good position."

## Book "Opportunity In Selling" Sent On Request

Simply send your name and the Association will mail you without cost an interesting book describing the present opportunities offered by the sales field—explaining why the demand for salesmen always exceeds the supply—why the scarcity of salesmen is particularly acute right now—telling just how its Course will qualify you for any line of selling. Included with the book are letters from hundreds of other members of the Association describing successes won, also a large list showing lines of business with openings for salesmen.

Mail coupon below or post card today—it may change your whole life. Address National Salesmen's Training Ass'n., Dept. 22A, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

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Dept. 22A, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

With no obligation on my part, please send me full information about the N.S.T.A. Training and Employment Service. Also a list showing lines of business with openings for salesmen.

Name.....  
Street.....  
City.....State.....

## Proof That Highest Salaries Are Paid Men in the Selling End of Business

The following figures represent the distribution of the payroll from a typical manufacturing concern:

**Administration Dept.**—58 men employees—accountants, bookkeepers, auditors, creditmen, correspondents and clerks. Average monthly salary \$114.80.

**Production Dept.**—212 men employees—superintendents, foremen, mechanics, shop workers, etc. Average monthly salary \$132.62.

**Sales Dept.**—44 men employees—sales managers and assistants, house, city and traveling salesmen. Average monthly salary and commissions \$346.48.

*Note: The above figures covering the salaries, however, in the Sales Department, do not include traveling expense money which would make the average for the salesman still higher.*

perated sigh. "I've a name for home and another for my job. But Haff insists I give up work; he's rather jealous. And since you wouldn't give him a job—"

"Huh?"

"I made up my mind I'd do my poor best to land him one." And then she changed her mocking tone to one sharp as the pen which Oswald Greenman had jabbed at his check-book. "I know Haff's deficiencies, but I like him well enough. And I think he'll earn part of his year's salary. You needn't make it the ten thousand he wanted. I'll be satisfied with five thousand a year for him, and—and I'll do my best to make him earn it. And as I say, one year'll be enough for him and for me. I wouldn't spend my entire young life coaxing a man into good citizenry."

"I don't know as—"

"Do you want your wife to know—"

"How about Haff knowing?"—grimly.

"I'd simply tell him that you saw me, followed me, annoyed me with your attentions. Haff thinks every man who sees me falls right in love with me. He's marrying me to protect me—from other men."

"Maybe. But—"

"I'd embellish the facts if I found it necessary to tell your wife."

"Oh—" He bit back a wrathful phrase, gave in. "I'll give him a job. But—I'll pay his salary out of my private bank-account. I don't let this house suffer for my idiocy."

Miss Grinchley—or Goldwell—looked at him with a certain admiration. "I rather think, under you, Haff may develop into something worth while."

"I hope," said his friend viciously, "he develops into a bolshevik and gets put in jail."

Kitty-Luella Grinchley-Goldwell chuckled prettily.

AT dinner that night Annemay Doppy in her pink gown was as pretty as a rose of Killarney, and inclined to be nicely sentimental.

"I certainly was lonesome without you, dear," she confided. "And while I wasn't really afraid you'd look at any pretty woman—but you wouldn't, would you?"

"If a pretty woman broke her legs—both legs and both arms—right in front of me, I wouldn't stop to look at her," vowed her young husband.

"You're different from most men," thanked Annemay softly.

Oswald Greenman began to hunt industriously through his evening paper for the latest news about the Czech-Slavs.

### "DEVIL'S GOLD"

BEATRICE GRIMSHAW has written for The Red Book Magazine one of the most striking stories of the tropics ever printed, the story of a man who like *Faust* sold his soul to the devil—deliberately submitted to a four-year imprisonment in an equatorial jail for the sake of the much gold he believed would be his pay. And—But you will wish to read for yourself the denouement, in the next, the February, issue of—

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

## THE KILLER

(Continued from page 43)

The stranger grabbed a glass and filled it half full of soothing syrup.

"Here, you aren't going to drink that!" I yelled at him. "Didn't you hear Sol tell you the dose is a spoonful?"

But he didn't pay me any attention. His hand was shaking so he could hardly connect with his own mouth, and he was panting as though he'd run a race.

"Well, no accounting for tastes," I said. "Where do you want me to ship your remains?"

He drank it down, shut his eyes a few minutes and held still. He had quit his shaking, and he looked me square in the face.

"What's it to you?" he demanded. "Huh? Aint you never seen a guy hit the hop before?"

HE stared at me so truculently that I was moved to righteous wrath, and I answered him back. I told him what I thought of him and his clothes and his conduct at quite some length. When I had finished, he seemed to have gained a new attitude of aggravating wise superiority.

"That's all right, kid; that's all right," he assured me. "Keep your hair on. I aint such a bad scout; but you gotta get used to me. Give me my hop, and I'm all right. Now, about this Hooper; you say you know him?"

"None better," I rejoined. "But what's he to you? That's a fair question."

He bored me with his beady rat eyes for several seconds.

"Friend of yours?" he asked briefly. Something in the intonations of his voice induced me to frankness.

"I have good cause to think he's trying to kill me," I replied.

He produced a pocketbook, fumbled in it for a moment, and laid before me a clipping. It was from the want column of a newspaper, and read as follows:

A. A. B.—Will deal with you on Your terms.—H. H.

"A. A. B.—that's me—Artie Brower. And 'H. H.'—that's him—Henry Hooper," he explained. "And that li'l piece of paper means that's he's caved, come off, war's over. Means I'm rich, that I can have my own ponies, if I want to, 'stead of touting somebody else's old dogs. It means that I got old H. H.—Henry Hooper—where the hair is short, and he's got to come my way!"

His eyes were glittering restlessly, and the pupils seemed to be unduly dilated. The whisky and opium together—probably an unaccustomed combination—were too much for his ill-balanced control. Every indication of his face and his narrow eyes was for secrecy and craft; yet for the moment he was opening up to me, a stranger, like an oyster. Even my inexperience could see that much, and I eagerly took advantage of my chance.

"You are a horseman, then?" I suggested.

"Me a horseman? Say, kid, you didn't

get my name. Brower—Artie Brower. Why I've ridden more winning races than any other man on the Pacific Coast. That's how I got onto old H. H. He used to have a pretty string of horses."

"He's got at least one good Morgan stallion now," said I. "I've seen him at Hooper's ranch."

"I know the old crock-trotter," scorned the true riding jockey. "Probably old Tim Westmore is hanging around too. He's in love with that horse."

"Is he in love with Hooper too?"

"Just like I am," said the jockey with a leer.

"So you're going to be rich!" said I.

"How's that?"

He leered at me again, going foxy. "Don't you wish you knew! But I'll tell you this: old H. H. is going to give me all I want—just because I ask him to."

I took another tack, affecting incredulity.

"The hell he is! He'll hand you over to Ramón, and that will be the last of a certain jockey."

"No, he wont do no such trick. I've fixed that; and he knows it. If he kills me, he'll lose all he's got 'stead of only part."

"You're drunk or dreaming," said I. "If you bother him, he'll just plain have you killed. That's a little way of his."

"And if he does, a friend of mine will just go to a certain place and get certain papers and give 'em to a certain lawyer—and then where's old H. H.? And he knows it, damn well. And he's going to be good to Artie and give him what he wants. We'll get along fine. Took him a long time to come to it; but I didn't take no chances while he was making up his mind; you can bet on that."

"Blackmail, eh?" I said, with just enough of a sneer to fire him.

"Blackmail, nothing!" he shouted. "I aint blackmail to take away what don't belong to a man at all!"

"What don't belong to him?"

"Nothing. Not a damn thing except his money. This ranch, the oil-wells in California, the cattle—not a damn thing. That was the agreement with his pardner when they split. And I've got the agreement! Now what you got to say?"

"Say? Why, it's loco! Why doesn't the partner raise a row?"

"He's dead."

"His heirs, then."

"He hasn't got but one heir—his daughter,—my heart skipped a beat in the amazement of a half-idea,—and she knew nothing about the agreement. Nobody knows but old H. H.—and me." He sat back, visibly gloating over me. But his mood was passing. His earlier exhilaration had died; and with it was dying the expansiveness of his confidence. The triumph of his last speech savored, he slipped again into his normal self. He looked at me suspiciously, and raised his whisky to cover his confusion.

"What's it to yuh, anyway?" he muttered into his glass darkly. His eyes were





# Train—and Take a Bigger Job

Every day you see opportunity beckoning the trained man. One man is picked out of the crowd and put in charge of his department. Another is called from some quite ordinary position with one house to a job of larger responsibility elsewhere. Still another is elected to an official position. Promotions and changes are constantly being made.

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LaSalle training which has helped thousands of ambitious men to advance will give you the exact, thoro knowledge which great business organizations are constantly seeking. It will give you the personal instruction of experts in the specialty you decide to follow.

These experts are practical business men—men who have held or are holding high executive positions in their respective lines.

They will give you the benefit of all their experience—take you thru every problem they have met and solved, explain the methods practiced in modern business, make everything so clear that you will have a broader and more concrete knowledge of your specialty than many men with years of experience.

Think of the advantage of having more than 450 business experts back of you—and of getting the results of all they have learned—all this information classified, made easy to understand—more than you can ever get from any one man or in any one office. LaSalle training and service equips you with a thoro knowledge of most modern business practice.

## Make Your Brains Worth \$100,000 or More

LaSalle training makes it possible to capitalize your brain at a high figure. Make your services worth \$5,000 a year to

business and your income is equal in value to five per cent on \$100,000. Any banker will tell you that five per cent per annum is about the limit on a conservative investment of money. And yet many LaSalle members are cashing in on their training at several times \$5,000 a year.

While the capitalist puts his cash out at interest you can invest, with equal profit, your brain power made valuable by specialized knowledge. Cash may be lost, stocks and bonds may fall in value—but a trained brain is yours for life and is always at a premium. Only about 300 hours of spare time applied under the direction of the LaSalle experts will make you a "brain capitalist." That has been proved, is being proved every day, by men who are getting big salary raises because they saw the value of higher business training for winning promotion—and got it.

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- "Returns ten times the cost."
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Co., 309 with the U. S. Steel Corporation, 946 with the B. & O. R. R., 364 with Armour & Co., 390 with the Standard Oil Co., and from 50 to 500 with each of scores of other great organizations.

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again shifting here and there, and his lips were snarled back malevolently to show his teeth.

At this precise moment the lords of chance willed that Windy Bill and others should intrude on our privacy by opening the door and hurling several whisky-flavored sarcasms at the pair of us. The jockey seemed to explode after the fashion of an overinflated ball. He squeaked like a rat, leaped to his feet, hurled the chair on which he had been sitting crash against the door from which Windy Bill *et al.* had withdrawn hastily, and ended by producing a small, wicked-looking automatic—then a new and strange weapon—and rushing out into the main saloon. There he announced that he was known to the *cognoscenti* as Art the Blood and was a city gunman in comparison with whom these plains so-called bad men were as sucking doves to the untamed eagle. Thence he glanced briefly at their ancestry as far as known, and ended by rushing forth in the general direction of McCloud's Hotel.

"Suffering giraffes!" gasped Windy Bill after the whirlwind had passed. "Was that the scared little rabbit that wept all them salt tears over at the depot? What brand of licker did you feed him, Sandy?"

I silently handed him the bottle.

"Soothing syrup—my God!" said Windy in hushed tones.

## CHAPTER VIII

AT that epoch I prided myself on being a man of resource, and I proceeded to prove it in a fashion that even now fills me with satisfaction. I annexed the remainder of that bottle of soothing syrup; I went to Sol Levi and easily procured delivery of the other five. Then I strolled peacefully to supper over at McCloud's Hotel. Pathological knowledge of dope-fiends was outside my ken; I could not guess how soon my man would need another dose of his "hop;" but I was positive that another would be needed. Inquiry of McCloud elicited the fact that the ex-jockey had swallowed a hasty meal and had immediately retired to Room 4. I found Room 4 unlocked, and Brower lying fully clothed, sound asleep, across the bed. I did not disturb him, except that I robbed him of his pistol. All looked safe for a while; but just to be certain, I took Room 6, across the narrow hall, and left both doors open. McCloud's Hotel never did much of a room business. By midnight the cowboys would be on their way for the ranches. Brower and myself were the only occupants of the second floor.

For two hours I smoked and read. The ex-jockey did not move a muscle. Then I went to bed and to a sound sleep; but I set my mind like an alarm clock, so that the slightest move from the other room would have fetched me broad awake. City-bred people may not know that this can be done by most outdoor men. I have listened subconsciously to horse-bells for so many nights, for example, that even on stormy nights the cessation of that faint tinkle will awaken me, while the crash of the elements or even the fall of a tree would not in the slightest disturb my tired slumbers. So now,

although the songs and stamping and racket of the revelers below-stairs in McCloud's bar did not for one second prevent my falling into deep and dreamless sleep, Brower's softest tread would have reached my consciousness.

However, he slept right through the night, and was still dead to the world when I slipped out at six o'clock to meet the eastbound train. The bag—a small black Gladstone—was aboard in charge of the baggagemen. I had no great difficulty in getting it from my friend the station-agent. Had he not seen me herding the locoed stranger? I secreted the black bag with the five full bottles of soothing syrup, slipped the half-emptied bottle into my pocket and returned to the hotel. There I ate breakfast, and sat down for a comfortable chat with McCloud while awaiting results.

Got them very promptly! About eight o'clock Brower came downstairs. He passed through the office, nodding curtsy to McCloud and me, and into the dining-room, where he drank several cups of coffee. Thence he passed down the street toward Sol Levi's. He emerged rather hurriedly and slanted across to the station.

"In about two minutes," I observed to McCloud, "you're going to observe you butterfly turn into a stinging lizard. He's going to head in this direction; and he'll probably aim to climb my hump. Such being the case, and the affair being private, you'll do me a favor by supervising something in some remote corner of the premises."

"Sure," said McCloud. And he stumped out on his wooden foot.

The comet hit at precisely seven-forty-two by McCloud's big clock. Its head was Brower at high speed and tension; and its tail was the light alkali dust of Arizona, mingled with the station-agent. No irresistible-force-and-immovable-body proposition in mine; I gave to the impact.

"Why, sure, I got 'em for you," I answered. "You left your dope lying around loose, so I took care of it for you. As for your bag, you seemed to set such store by it that I got that for you too."

Which deflated that particular enterprise, for the moment, anyway. The station-agent, too mad to spit, departed before he should be tempted beyond his strength to resist homicide.

"I suppose you're taking care of my gun for me too," said Brower, but his irony was weak. He was evidently off the boil.

"Your gun?" I echoed. "Have you lost your gun?"

He passed his hand across his eyes. His superexcitement had passed, leaving him weak and nervous. Now was the time for my counter-attack.

"Here's your gun," said I. "Didn't want to collect any lead while you were excited. And I've got your dope—in a safe place," I added, "and you'll not see any of it again until you answer me a few questions, and answer them straight."

"If you think you can roll me for blackmail," he came back with some decision, "you're left a mile."

"I don't want a cent; but I do want a talk."

"Shoot," said he.

"How often do you have to have this

# Teeth Grow Dingy

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dope—for the best results; and how much of it at a shot?"

He stared at me for a moment, then laughed.

"What's it to yuh?" he repeated his formula.

"I want to know."

"I get to needing it about once a day. Three grains will carry me by."

"All right; that's what I want to know. Now listen to me. I'm custodian of this dope, and you'll get your regular ration as long as you stick with me."

"I can always hop a train. This aint the only hamlet on the map," he reminded me.

"That's always what you can do, if you find we can't work together. That's where you've got me if my proposition doesn't sound good."

"What is your proposition?" he asked after a moment.

"Before I tell you, I'm going to give you a few pointers on what you're up against."

**I** PROCEEDED to tell him something of the old man's methods, from the "boomerang" to vicarious murder.

"And he gets away with it?" said Brower when I had finished.

"He certainly does," said I. "Now," I continued, "you may be solid as a brick church, and your plans may be water-tight, and old Hooper may kill the fatted four-year-old, for all I know. But if I were you, I wouldn't go sashaying all alone out to Hooper's ranch. It's altogether *too* blame confiding and innocent."

"If anything happens to me, I've left directions for those contracts to be recorded," he pointed out. "Old Hooper knows that."

"Oh, sure!" I replied. "Just like that! But one day your trustworthy friend back yonder will get a letter in your well-known hand-write that will say that all is well and the goose hangs high, that the old man is a prince and has come through, and that in accordance with the nice, friendly agreement you have reached, he—your friend—will hand over the contract to a very respectable lawyer herein named, and so forth and so on, ending with your equally well-known John Hancock."

"Well, that's all right."

"I hadn't finished the picture. In the meantime you will be getting out of it just one good swift kick; and that is all."

"I shouldn't write any such letter—not till I felt the feel of the dough."

"Not at first, you wouldn't," I said softly. "Certainly not at first. But after a while you would. These renegade Mexicans—like Hooper's Ramón for example—know a lot of rotten little tricks. They drive pitch-pine splinters into your legs and set fire to them, for one thing—or make small cuts in you with a knife, and load them up with powder squibs in oiled paper—so the blood wont wet them

—and touch them off. And so on! When you've been shown about ten per cent of what old Ramón knows about such things, you'll write most any kind of a letter."

"My God!" he muttered, thrusting the ridiculous derby to the back of his head.

"So you see you'd look sweet, walking trustfully into Hooper's claws. That's what that newspaper ad was meant for. And when the respectable lawyer wrote that the contract had been delivered, do you know what would happen to you?"

The ex-jockey shuddered.

"But you've only told me part of what I want to know," I pursued. "You got me side-tracked. This daughter of the dead partner, this girl—what about her? Where is she now?"

"Europe, I believe."

"When did she go?"

"About three months ago."

"Any other relatives?"

"Not that I know of."

"H'm!" I pondered. "What does she look like?"

"She's about medium height, dark, good figure, good-looking, all right. She's got eyes wide apart and a wide forehead. That's the best I can do. Why?"

"Anybody heard from her since she went to Europe?"

"How should I know?" rejoined Brower impatiently. "What you driving at?"

"I think I've seen her. I believe she's not in Europe at all. I believe she's a prisoner at the ranch."

"My aunt!" ejaculated Brower. His nervousness was increasing—the symptoms I was to recognize so well. "Why the hell don't you just shoot him from behind a bush? I'll do it, if you want."

"He's too smooth for that." And I told him what Hooper had told me. "His hold on these Mexicans is remarkable. I don't doubt that fifty of the best killers in the Southwest have lists of the men old man Hooper thinks might lay him out. And every man on that list would get his within a year—without any doubt. I don't doubt that partner's daughter would go first of all. You too, of course."

"My aunt!" groaned the jockey again.

"He's a killer," I went on, "by nature, and by interest—a bad combination. He ought to be tramped out like a rattlesnake. But this is a new country, and it's near the border. I expect he's got me marked. If I have to, I'll kill him just like I would a rattlesnake; but that wouldn't do me a whole lot of good and would probably get a bunch assassinated. I'd like to figure something different. So you see you'd better come on in while the coming is good."

"I see," said the ex-jockey, very much subdued. "What's your idea? What do you want me to do?"

That stumped me. To tell the truth, I had no idea at all what to do.

"I don't want you to go out to Hooper's ranch alone," said I.

"Trust me!" he rejoined fervently.

"I reckon the first best thing is to get along out of town," I suggested. "That black bag all the plunder you got?"

"That's it."

"Then we'll go out a-horseback."

**W**E had lunch and a smoke and settled up with McCloud. About mid-afternoon we went on down to the livery corral. I knew the keeper pretty well, of course; so I borrowed a horse and saddle for Brower. The latter looked with extreme disfavor on both.

"This is no race-meet," I reminded him. "This is a means of transportation."

"Sorry I aint got nothing better," apologized Meigs, to whom I had confided my companion's profession—I had to account for such a figure somehow. "All my saddle-horses went off with a mine-outfit yesterday."

"What's the matter with that chestnut in the shed?"

"He's all right, fine beast—only it aint mine. It belongs to Ramón."

"Ramón from Hooper's?"

"Yeah."

"I'd let you ride my horse and take Meigs' old skate myself," I said to Brower. "But when you first get on him, this bronc of mine is a rip-humming tail-twister. Aint he, Meigs?"

"He's a bad *caballo*," corroborated Meigs.

"Does he buck?" queried Brower indifferently.

"Every known fashion—bites, scratches, gouges and paws. Want to try him?"

"I got a headache," replied Brower grouchy. "Bring out your old dog."

When I came back from roping and blindfolding the twisted dynamite I was engaged in "gentling," I found that Brower was saddling the mournful creature with my saddle. My expostulation found him very snappy and very arbitrary. His opium-irritated nerves were beginning to react. I realized that he was not far short of explosive obstinacy. So I conceded the point—although, as every rider knows, a cowboy's saddle and a cowboy's gun are like unto a toothbrush when it comes to lending. Also it involved changing the stirrup-length on the livery saddle. I needed things just right to ride Tiger through the first five minutes.

When I had completed this latter operation, Brower had just finished drawing tight the cinch. His horse stood dejectedly. When Brower had made fast the latigo, the horse—as such dispirited animals often do—heaved a deep sigh. Something snapped beneath the slight strain of the in-drawn breath.

"Dogged if your cinch aint busted!" cried Meigs with a loud laugh. "Lucky for you your friend did borrow your saddle! If you'd climbed Tiger with that outfit, you could just naturally have begun pickin' out the likely-looking she-angels."

I dropped the stirrup and went over to examine the damage. Both of the quarter straps on the off side had given away. I found that they had been cut nearly through with a sharp knife. My eye strayed to Ramón's chestnut horse standing under the shed.

Further breath-taking incidents in this remarkable story of the old West will appear in the next—the February—issue of The Red Book Magazine.

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